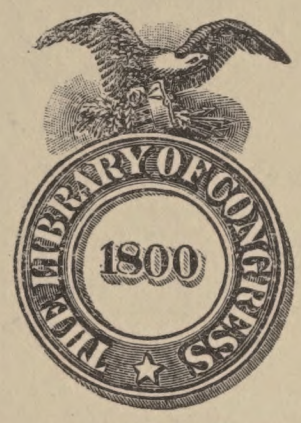

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LIPPINCOTT'S
MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER, 1907

THE WHITED SEPULCHRE*

THE TALE OF PELÉE

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BY WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

I.

PETER CONSTABLE sat forward on the main-deck of his own yacht, the *Madame de Stael,* which had just been hitched to the bottom of Saint Pierre's harbor. His single guest for the cruise, Hayden Breen, was back in the cabin, with a pipe, a book, and a long thin glass. Three weeks previously, early in April, Constable had met Breen for the first time. And of that meeting you must hear.

It came about some sixty hours before the *Madame* cleared from New York harbor, and a queer night for both men. Constable had been pacing the deck alone, when he heard a soft step below on the Brooklyn pier. He bent over the railing, and perceived that a stranger was about to throw himself into the water.

Constable called sharply. The figure at the pier-edge stiffened, and a face swung upward. The two parleyed for a moment, and the voice that was borne to Constable was that of a gentleman. The man below hesitated,—considered,—then accepted with a laugh an invitation to come aboard. Presently in the cabin the owner of the *Madame* faced

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an individual, tastefully, even freshly attired, and one whose manner betrayed no flaw. The face was pale, imposing; a reckless face, but not devastated,—though the eyes, perhaps, had a look of having seen too much. For two hours the pair talked about books, pictures, dollars, the tropics, and suicide. At the end, Constable was so strongly impressed that he invited the stranger to be his guest for the cruise.

Breen glanced at him whimsically. "I wonder if I really did drop off the dock, and this is the astral plane," he mused.

"This is the edge of Brooklyn, and I am serious," Constable said.

"This is the edge of Brooklyn, and I am astonished," Breen replied.

"So far as I know, you would be my only guest."

"Had you better not wait until to-morrow? Think again."

"I should prefer that you say 'yes' now."

"Better hear more about me first. I have spoken only in generalities. My past is at your disposal," Breen warned.

"I should like to hear much about you, but not in the light of your decision. Will you go with me?"

"Yes."

"Where do you intend to stay to-night?"

"You altered my only plan, you will remember, Mr. Constable."

"I 'll have a berth made up for you at once. I 'm glad you have found it possible to look up the tropics again," the owner finished.

Breen appeared content, and accepted the various offices from his host with a fine, half-humorous appreciation. Constable found, in their early intercourse, not the slightest cause to regret his impulsive invitation. That the other did not harry him with references to his kindnesses was, to Constable's way of thinking, the severest test of a thoroughbred. Breen did not leave the ship, and seldom the cabin, during the entire period of preparation. He sat in a reclining-chair and read the essayists, preserving the edge of appreciation with pipe tobacco and long glasses of soda, mildly-spirited. Whatever had been his attitude before, he accepted what life offered him now in calmness. He still had the jaded human's last resource, when this unexpected but pleasant portion of life was at an end. Such seemed to be the philosophy of this creature who had passed the death sentence upon himself.

Constable slept aboard the last night before sailing, and was at breakfast with his guest about eight in the morning, when a servant entered the saloon to announce that a gentleman on the pier wanted to speak with "Mr. Constable's friend." Breen set his coffee-cup down slowly, and his eyes met his host's.

"Mr. Constable," he said, "you have noted, no doubt, that I have remained under cover rather closely since our interesting meeting. There is no one in New York whom I care to see, but the person out yonder feels differently toward me. In fact, he is very much absorbed

in my movements. I happened to step to the railing a few minutes before breakfast, and caught his eye. The truth is, if I see him now, he will persuade me to go with him, and I would much rather accompany you."

"What would you advise?" Constable asked quickly.

"With your interests at heart, I can only advise you to bid me good-by and allow me to thank you for many genuine courtesies. Perhaps you remember that I offered to outline my past, and you deterred me for the time-being."

"I want you to go, of course. What is the simplest way to manage this?"

"How soon do you sail?"

Constable went to the speaking-tube and called Captain Negley. A moment later he turned to Breen with the information that the *Madame* was just ready to clear, and would be put off as quietly and quickly as possible. The servant entered with the word that the visitor insisted upon seeing "Mr. Constable's friend."

There was a passage of bells from the bridge to the engine-room, and the *Madame* came to life. Constable climbed to the bridge. The stranger below on the pier was in a furious state of mind, and was trying to force his way aboard. It was plain that Breen was badly wanted, and equally plain to Constable that he was running into the danger of entangling himself in the meshes of the law; but he was stoutly disinclined to give up an admirable companion for the voyage. The progress of clearing went on quickly. The *Madame's* prow was turned out into the harbor, and the signal given to free the aft cable.

At this point the insistent stranger raised his voice and struggled with the dock-man to prevent him from slipping the rope. Constable stepped to the railing of the bridge and invoked the assistance of two men on the pier-head.

"Take that fellow in hand," he ordered. "He seems to be laboring under a delusion. That's good, men!"

The stranger was overpowered, and the cable cast off. Harsh fragments of speech were carried upward, but no sentences that cohered sufficiently for Constable's intelligence, until the very last, when, as the ship swung free, he heard plainly:

"I'll get you both, if I have to follow you around the world!"

"I don't know but what you will," the man on the bridge muttered to himself. "You seem moved by a rather emphatic disposition."

That night, in his oil-skins, Constable paced the hurricane-deck. His mind was serene, and he was inclined to regard the affair of the morning as a far-off thing which didn't signify. What had placed Breen in the fugitive-lists, he did not care to know. He was just enough not to forget that there are regrettable transactions in every

man's past—a black bundle of perversities which some men designate their "chamber of horrors," and others call their "pet frailties." Constable felt that he was called upon to judge no man. He liked Breen, and did not want his liking altered, save for the better. He could not imagine Breen doing a cowardly thing; and anything else did not greatly matter.

The spray swept in gusts over the *Madame's* dipping prow. The bare masts, tipped with lights, swung with a giant sweep from port to starboard and back to port again, fingering the black heavens for the blown-out stars. Constable could n't be half-miserable out there on the tossing floor of the Atlantic.

Mr. Pugh, the new third officer, secured at the last moment to take the place of Mr. Hatt, who was ill, was on the bridge now. Occasionally in the glow of Pugh's cigar Constable could see the face of the seaman. It seemed small, colorless, and rubbed out—not the face of a man who could bring a ship up to port through a raving gale. It was nearly midnight when Constable went below. Breen was still reading.

"How does it happen, Peter, that a man of your substance happens to be out here in a sumptuous yacht with only one guest and that an accidental one?" Breen questioned.

"I have few friends, and little aptness for entertaining," Constable said. "I would n't know what to do with a ship-load of guests. I took out a party once. The members of this party played poker. I would rush down to the cabin-door, calling, 'Come on deck quickly, my friends. An old socker of a whale is snoring off our port bow!' 'All right, Peter,' somebody would say; 'bring it right in. It's your deal, Dickie.' One man got all the money finally, and then there were testy tempers."

"Men—men," said Breen; "but women go down to sea in other men's boats."

"I don't know any women up there," Constable declared. "By 'up there' I refer in general to the States and Canada. I should n't know what to do with women here. They 'd be sick. They 'd talk about things they did n't know about, put on rakish caps, look frowsy when the wind was on, and when they had sprung all their changes of raiment, they 'd want to go home."

"Peter, you are on the wrong tack. There are rich men's sons who can go to sea without poker or bridge; and feminine aristocrats who know no sea-sickness, and who look adorable in rakish yachting-caps and blowing hair. Some time you 'll find one——"

Breen halted. The other was staring hard into the prism of glass on the buffet—staring and smiling.

"I believe you are jockeying me into delivering platitudes, Peter," Breen finished.

"I have an uncle in Martinique, Breen,—a fine old chap whom you 'll be glad to know. This uncle has a partner in the fruit and sugar business. They are keen, kindly men, both—partners in the higher sense of the word. My uncle is a bachelor, held sweet by a past, the good old story. His partner, however, has a wife and daughter."

"Ah!"

"They all live together in a grand old plantation-house on the bluffs south of the *Morne d'Orange,* Saint Pierre. Mrs. Stansbury, the wife of my uncle's partner—it is important that you get this—is a very remarkable woman, tempered like a Damascus blade, ornamental as the vase of Alhambra. This description is not extempore. I have spent years thinking it out. I am proud of it. A splendid Frenchwoman, this mother, with mystic eyes, and some strange insight which leads her to dislike me soulfully, and the stuff of Jeanne d'Arc in her brain and hand. She 's not quite adjustable to words. You are fascinated, yet afraid of her. At least, I am. She fires me with a childish zeal to show the best wares I have. The result is, I play circus before her."

"Most entrancing lady," said Breen.

"The daughter is more like the beloved Josephine," Constable resumed lightly—"brave and true and tender. At least, from my pilgrimages and meditations, I should say that Miss Stansbury resembled the empress more than the Sword-Handed Jeanne. And to think that once she graced these very decks! That was a marvellous day, old man, a Caribbean day of blue and gold. The maiden improved it by pointing out to me how utterly worthless I am in the world—'just sailing 'round.'

"Of course she is quite right," Constable went on, "but that does n't make it any easier to bear. With all the impressiveness which comes of being twenty and a girl—that was the *Madame's* first voyage, five years ago—she informed me that a man is a nobody, even if he has a billion, when he is n't of some use in the world. Exquisite little preacher! Such things were never thought of, nor spoken to, mortal man before! I explained my view, that having all the money needful, it was my privilege to play for culture instead of coin, to water my mental garden as a life pursuit, but she broke up all my arguments, beat down my ideals. I regarded my valueless past and yearned to become an apostle of action instanter.

"I see I am entertaining you, so I 'll finish. I went home, buckled the *Madame* to Brooklyn, and disappeared—took her at her word! I shall do it again some time. For two solid months I did n't hurt anybody's feelings, and earned seventy dollars and board, stoking. Good clean stoking. Back and forth from Savannah to Boston in the bowels of an old coast liner, learning bunkers, boilers, and fire-beds at first

hand; specializing in coals and callouses. I made a fairly decent coal-passer, and met Denny Macready down there in the dark—Denny, who now passes tea. Then I scrubbed up again and steamed the *Madame* down to Martinique, to tell Miss Stansbury all about it, and show her my recommend from the third engineer. She was away in Europe. Her father says she will never be as beautiful as her mother. I thought perhaps we might look in on Martinique on our way around the islands. The statue of Josephine is there, you know."

"Your sentences are becoming uncoupled, Peter. You are shirring the narrative," said Breen.

"Well, I 've been taking an annual course in old Pelée since then. Saint Pierre sits in the shadow of the volcano, and from a geological standpoint——"

"Exactly, but——"

"Oh, there is no joyous cracker at the finish of this story. Lady Commander—that is the creature of splendor, the mother—is still at war with me, and Miss Stansbury still cherishes the view that I am 'just sailing 'round.'"

Peter Constable was singular in various ways, possessing a large fortune and no fixture, save the natural bent of a student. He had specialized in geology for a dozen years. Exceedingly tall, big-boned, and angular, Constable had a plain, kindly face and large, quick hands. His nose was immense, and not to be classified. He carried his head bent slightly forward, as many tall men do; and it was a well-browed head of goodly contour. There was a puzzling solemnity in his countenance. One would not have been surprised to hear that this man was a gambler, a preacher, or a humorist; and, not knowing exactly why, one would expect it to be added that he was a good man in his class.

II.

Constable had an un-American capacity for waiting. He might have gone ashore in Saint Pierre that night, but instead he sat alone on deck, in the windless harbor. Queerly restless, he regarded the illumined terraces of the city. Back of all his levity and deliberation, it was not to be concealed from his own mind that before him lay the goal of the cruise. She was there, far to the right, among the lights on the mountain-side—the little girl who had told him he was a nobody. Constable smiled, and grew serious from the start of an old thought. It was not impossible for her to have met some emperor who had demanded her heart for his throne-room.

The harbor was weirdly hot. The heavy, moist sweetness of a horticultural garden, to which he had likened the nights of Saint Pierre, had been supplanted by dry, devitalized draughts of air. His

throat and nostrils were irritated, and tobacco became unpalatable. There was no moon, and the stars were so faint in the north that the mass of Pelée was scarcely shaped against the sky. The higher lights of the city had a reddish, uncertain glow, as if a thin film of fog hung between them and the eye; but to the south the night grew clearer. He followed the circling shore with his eyes to the *Morne d'Orange,* which marked the southern boundary of the city. Beyond the *morne* stood the great plantation-house where she lived. The night was pure purple in that direction, and the torrid stars unsullied.

Breen essayed to read the following forenoon away, leaving Constable to make his first descent upon the city alone. The *Madame* had already been sighted from the plantation-house, and certain members of the establishment were out to welcome the guest. Indeed, Constable had scarcely stepped ashore from his launch at the Sugar Landing when he heard his name called and saw the flutter of a handkerchief above the burdened heads of the natives in the market-place. It was Miss Stansbury, in a carriage. She greeted him merrily:

"Uncle Joey went out to the ship from the lower landing. I told him I would capture you if you touched here. We are very glad you 've come, Mr. Constable."

He took her hand and gained the seat beside her in the carriage. "This is great luck," he said nervously. "I feared you might be away somewhere—in Europe or the States. Would you mind me looking at this little book in your lap?"

"It 's a little volume of essays," she told him, "and I 'm not sure that I greatly admire their spirit, nor the views of the writer. He makes a statement, for instance, that women are incapable of the finer senses of friendship; that women cannot adhere through severe tests."

Miss Stansbury was to encounter, a few days later, stirring cause to remember these words and Constable's reply, which is neither here nor there, ethical niceties not being his specialty.

"The man is an arrant fool, and probably could n't get a woman to live with him," he said with finality.

The ponies were ascending the rise in Rue Victor Hugo, at the southern end of the city. The *porteuses,* coming down from the hill-trails, the lithest, hardiest women of the occident, bore a pitiable look of fatigue in their faces. The pressure of the heat, and the dispiriting condition of the atmosphere, were revealed in the distended eyelids and colorless, twisted lips of the burden-bearers. As Miss Stansbury looked out toward the harbor for Uncle Joey's boat, Constable regarded her profile. The delicacy of color and contour brought to him an imperious realization of her fairness. It appeared that in his absence the rarest touches of perfection had been set.

"You have n't changed much," she said laughingly. "You were

always willing to agree that I was right, and all men, yourself most of all, deeply in the wrong. Don't you remember how I used to preach to you about a man's need of doing something emphatic?"

"Indeed I remember. Your lessons made a deep impression."

"At least, you bore very gracefully with an oppressive companion," she declared. "Just as if you did n't know best how to dispose of your time and talents!"

"On the contrary, you were more nearly right than you knew. I was in need of just such moral stimulus. The sorry part, Miss Stansbury, is that I don't bring you admirably invested talents even now."

She glanced at him quickly. "I believe I understand better some of the difficulties you have had to contend with," she said. "We all read how you kidnapped the entire New York newsboys' association—how you fed the grimy little chaps oceans of charlotte russe and mountains of plum-duff, giving them a Sunday afternoon at sea, and presents to remember. That was fine."

"I forgot to tell Breen about that," he remarked, smiling at the recollection. "Breen is a friend of mine, who was good enough to come along. He 's a rare fellow, and you 'll like him."

"You make people find out by themselves so much about you," she observed. "Think how you let me believe you were absolutely without interests or ambitions—even last year, while you were making daily visits to the jaws of Pelée. It was months afterward that I learned what those journeys meant—and then through the press. We all read the paper you delivered before the geological society on Antillean formations. Think how I felt while recalling some of my lectures on your careless attitude toward life. You might have told me!"

"I failed to discover the secret, Miss Stansbury," he said quickly. "Old Pelée has a big story for the right man, but I was unable to drag it forth. I had nothing to be proud of to tell you."

The ponies had gained the eminence of the *Morne d'Orange.* Ahead was the broad, white plantation-house, where the Stansburys and Constable's uncle lived. To the right was the dazzling, sapphire bay, where the *Madame* was moored among the shipping; behind and below, the red-tiled roofs of Saint Pierre, and behind the city, back of all, *La Montagne Pelée,* huge like an emperor of the Romans, paled in the intense light of morning, and wearing a delicate white ruching of cloud about his crown.

"It is different with most people," she replied. "They have so much to tell of little things. The silent men who are dreaming of big things all the time—think of a conversation like this when the island is glowing like a brazier!"

"What is the meaning of this terrific sultriness and the white scum in the gutters?" he asked suddenly.

"Why, I supposed you understood——"

"Understood what, Miss Stansbury?"

"Why, old Pelée has been showering us with ash from time to time during the past ten days. It is the taint of sulphur that spoils the air. The city would have been white now, except for the heavy rain that washed the ashes away just before dawn."

Constable turned apprehensively toward the volcano. He had come into an inheritance of winged thoughts in the presence of the woman, but the news of Pelée's activity disordered the very root of things. Mrs. Stansbury was standing on the porch of the great house, whose walls, verandas, and portcullises were cooled and perfumed by embroidering vines. The driveway was bordered by Rose of Sharon hedges, and the gardens flamed with poinsettias and roses. There was a cool grove of mango and India trees at the end of the lawn, edged with moon-flowerets and oleanders. Back of the plantation-house waved the sloping seas of cane; in front, the Caribbean. On the south up-reared the peaks of Carbet; on the north, the Monster.

Constable advanced eagerly to give his hand to Mrs. Stansbury, who received his greeting with cooling repression. He would have been dismayed, had he not felt on former occasions polar draughts from this source. Still, he paid her unquestioning homage. It was enough for him that Mr. Stansbury, an admirable American gentleman, honored her with a life of one-pointed devotion; that his uncle, Joseph Wall, of sound mental balance and heart vastnesses, cherished her good-will. It was enough for Constable, indeed, that Mrs. Stansbury mothered a daughter. He was by no means above conceiving that another should dislike him; although Mrs. Stansbury was in other respects an Isis veiled too darkly for his perception. The years had not touched the elder woman. She had the same tendril-like delicacy of figure and refinement of face. Her eyes had often startled him with their world-weariness and world-knowledge. They were always wonderful—the eyes of a mystic and vibrant with the suggestion of undiscovered continents in their depths. The cool, gracilent fingers slipped quickly from his hand.

"I have always remembered your gracious hospitality," Constable said.

"I remember, too," Mrs. Stansbury replied, with scarcely a trace of a smile. "Who could forget the dentist—the dentist to *La Montagne Pelée?* Have you come again to look into the mouth of the mountain?"

III.

Constable had incurred the especial displeasure of the mother on a former visit, through the unabashed fashion with which he had endeavored to pry into the secrets of the volcano. Old Pelée was

identified with the inner life of Martinique, like the memory and the statue of Josephine. Mrs. Stansbury felt that the mysteries of the mountain were not for the eyes of man; least of all, for the eyes of an American, in whom the spirit of veneration was not. She had a very clear picture in her mind of Constable as he peered, and possibly spat, into the appalling chasms of the summit, and pottered about in the dim gorges which seamed the Titan's flanks. The daughter had shared a tithe of her mother's opinion until Constable's monograph on the mountain had fallen into her hands. Then she realized that this was no parvenu who had carried on his studies in their midst.

Mr. Stansbury was away on his annual trip to the States. The mantle of host fell, accordingly, upon the ample shoulders of Uncle Joey. He arrived within an hour, and his trip out to the *Madame* had not been futile, since he brought Breen with him. The latter seemed to divine at once the defective current between Mrs. Stansbury and his friend, and forestalled any slight tension during dinner that evening by sprightly narratives of the voyage. He seemed to attract the attention of the elder woman, and to be stimulated by her close scrutiny of his face and personality. That evening, after dinner, the men moved out upon the veranda to smoke.

"This is second-hand air, Uncle Joey," Constable remarked. "I shut my eyes a moment ago and thought I was down among the steel-mills of the lower Monongahela."

"You 're the expert in Pelée, not I, Peter," the old planter answered. "April and May are n't our best months, but I never knew such heat between rains as we are having now."

Constable moved out into the garden to look at the sky. In no way did he underestimate the seriousness of the time. In the south, low and to the left of the Carbet peaks, the new moon arose, but without the sharpness of outline peculiar to the tropics. It was of an orange hue, instead of silvery, and blurred, as if seen through a fine wire screen. A faint, low rumbling was heard from the north. It was like thunder, but the horizon above and around Pelée was unscathed by lightning. Miss Stansbury had been at the piano, but the music now ceased.

"How long is it since the mountain has had a session of grumbling, Uncle Joey?" Constable called.

"From time to time for the past ten days. Before that, twenty years, Peter."

"This is quite a novelty—this addled-egg moon," Constable added. "It 's the ash-fog lying between. If there is n't a heavy rain in the night, we 'll have a white world to-morrow."

Miss Stansbury appeared on the veranda, and moved out upon the lawn, where Constable was standing.

"Are you really so greatly worried, Mr. Constable?" she asked in a low tone.

"Why, the fact that Pelée is acting out of the ordinary is enough to make any one sceptical of his intentions. There are a few man-eaters among the mountains of the world—Krakatoa, Bandai-san, Coto-paxi, Vesuvius, Etna—chronic old ruffians, whom you can't tame. A thousand years is nothing to them. They wait, still as crocodiles, until cities have formed on their flanks and seers have built temples in their rifts. They have tasted blood, you see, and the madness comes back. Pelée is a suspect."

They had reached the highway. Constable was thinking that he would have journeyed across the world to study a laboring monster, like Pelée in his present stress, but the idea of the girl being in the shadow of danger took all the relish from the work.

"I should prefer to hear you discuss the treachery of volcanoes outside of the fire zone," she said, shivering. "It 's like listening to ghost stories in a haunted house."

"I 'll tell you the best way out of it," he declared. "I don't say that Pelée is about to rise and rend Saint Pierre, but I want to take you all out to sea for a few days. The *Madame* will behave her prettiest with you on board."

"I can't imagine anything finer, but you know mother is not a graceful sailor."

"Unfortunately, any effort of mine to prevail upon her might spoil matters," Constable said.

"Oh, I don't think that," she replied; "but it will be something of a conquest for any one to shake her trust in Pelée. Still, I 'll do what I can."

"And I 'll begin work to-night upon Uncle Joey. By the way, Miss Stansbury," he added in a lowered voice, "don't you think that if I chose to stay here in Saint Pierre, your mother might consent more willingly to try a few days on the *Madame?* You know Pelée is more than ever interesting to me now."

"That would be entirely unthinkable," she replied hastily.

Pelée rumbled again, and the girl's fingers tightened upon his arm. The heavy wooden shutters of the plantation-house rattled in the windless night; the ground upon which they stood seemed to wince at the monster's pain. The man was conscious of the fragrance of roses and magnolia-blooms above the acrid taint of the air. It was as if, through some strange freak of the atmosphere, a pressure was exerted upon the flowers, forcing a sudden expulsion of perfume. The young moon was a yellow, formless blotch in the fouled sky. A sigh like the whimpering of a sick child was audible from the servants' cabins behind the big house.

"You 'll plead with your mother to-night?" he whispered, as they walked back.

Mrs. Stansbury was on the porch. Her nicely modulated voice, as she spoke to her daughter, struck Constable with a cold force. The women went indoors. Breen and Uncle Joey were in conversation. Constable drew his chair to the north end of the porch, and faced the mountain—a vast black beast couchant under the dim stars. Since he had gazed in that direction from the ship the night before, the whole purpose of his life had changed. Then he had asked no sweeter favor of the Fates than to be permitted to observe the giant's struggle to contain the fury of his fluids. Now his thoughts were magnetized by a new substance—the substance of fear. Self, the tribune of all his reckonings heretofore, had been lifted from his brain, as a familiar volume is lifted from its case.

"I knew it," he muttered. "I knew it five years ago—that I should come back here some day, look upon that girl, and become a raver like other men. To think that I could stay away from her a year at a time!"

He regarded the double chain of lights out in the harbor—the *Madame* pulling at her moorings among the lesser craft, like a lustrous empress in the midst of dusky maid-servants. Between the black mountain and the illumined ship stretched a battle. It was his own particular battle. His name was called from the lists. To win was to run away. The old mastering complication was his at last. Yesterday a splendid contribution to the imperfect records of seismology, such as was now within his grasp, was identified with his highest ambition. To-day the safety of the woman towered above it, as the dome of St. Peter's above the head of a tourist. He was afraid of Pelée. Breen drew over to him and sat down upon the railing.

"What 's on your mind, Peter?"

"A mountain," said Constable.

Rain did not fall in the night, and Constable was abroad with the dawn, regarding the white world and the source of the phenomenon, with the sketchy tints of earliest morning upon the huge eastern slope. He had slept little, and that with his face turned to the north. He would scarcely close his eyes before a cortege of volcanoes would pass before him, as in a dream—all the destroyers of history, each with a vivid individuality, like the types of faces of all nations—the story of each, and the smear it had made of men and the works of men.

Most of them had given warning. Pelée was warning now. His warning was written upon the veins of every leaf, painted upon the curve of every blade of grass, sheeted evenly white upon the tiles of every roof. Gray dust blown by steam from the bursting quarries of the mountain, clogging the gutters of the city, and the throats of men!

It was a moving white cloud in the rivers, a chalky shading that marked the highest reach of the harbor tide. It settled in the hair of the children, and complicated the toil of the bees in the nectar-cups of the roses. With league-long cerements, and in a voice that caused to tremble his dwarfed cohorts, the hills and *mornes,* great Pelée had proclaimed his warning in the night.

Constable was standing in the garden. "Good old Vulcan, to wait for her!" he murmured. "Sit tight for another day, and keep a stiff bridle-arm—for one more day!"

"It is n't really ash, you know," he found himself saying at breakfast, "but rock ground as fine as neat in the mills of hell, and shot out by steam through Pelée's valves."

"How intensely graphic!" Mrs. Stansbury observed.

"It 's a graphic morning," said Breen, "and Peter is virile from a night of meditation. I believe he has made a covenant with the mountain."

Constable had met the eyes of the daughter, and found no hope there. He had taken his uncle apart and charged him to labor for the cause of flight.

"Ursula," the planter began gravely, addressing Mrs. Stansbury, "Peter has asked us to spend a few days with him in the Caribbean, on board the *Madame.* I confess that I don't like the way Pelée is acting, and the heat is telling on us all. The prospect of a refreshing breath of the Trades is a mighty pleasant one to me. Does n't it sound so to you?"

"As a specialist in volcanoes, I should think Mr. Constable would find it impossible to leave at such a time," the elder woman answered smoothly. "The mountain needs his doctor more than ever now."

"I have not yet attained unto such a scientific passion that I can forget my friends entirely," Constable said earnestly.

"For my part," the girl hastened to say, "Mr. Constable's invitation is immensely alluring."

Mrs. Stansbury's eyelids contracted ever so little, and she lingered upon the words of her ultimatum, as if there were a tang of pleasure in the utterance. "The *Panther* arrives day after to-morrow morning, with the New York mail. I would not under any conditions think of leaving Saint Pierre before receiving Mr. Stansbury's letters."

Constable stared at the face of the daughter. He read there terror of the mountain, and pity for himself. He arose, not daring to trust himself to speak again. Breen found him in his room a few minutes later.

"Peter," he said softly, "has it ever occurred to you that the map of Europe, and the history of France, might greatly have been altered if our beloved Josephine had been gifted with a will like that?"

IV.

In the Rue de Rivoli there was a little stone wine-shop. The street was short, narrow, crooked, and ill-paved—a cleft in Saint Pierre's terrace-work. Just across from the vault-like entrance to the shop, the white, scarred cliff arose to another flight of the city. Between the shop and the living-rooms behind there was a little court, shaded by mango-trees. Dwarfed banana-shrubs flourished in the shade of the mangoes, and singing-birds were caged in the lower foliage. Since the sun could find no entrance, the wine-shop was dark as a cave, and as cool. One window, if an aperture like the clean wound of a thirteen-inch gun could be called a window, opened to the north; and from it, by the grace of a crook in the Rue de Rivoli, might be seen the mighty-calibred cone of Pelée.

Père Rabeaut's wine was very good, and some of it was very cheap. The service was much as you made it, for if you were known you were permitted to help yourself. In this world there was no one of station too lofty to go to Pierre Rabeaut's; and since those of no station whatsoever drank rum instead of wine, you would meet no one there to whom it was not a privilege to say "*Bon jour.*"

"Come and see my birds," the crafty Rabeaut would say, if he approved of you.

"Where do you live?" you might ask, being a stranger.

"In the coolest hovel of Saint Pierre," was his invariable answer.

And presently, if you were truly alive, you would find yourself in the little stone wine-shop, listening to the birds and looking over the arcanum of casks, demijohns, and bottles, filled with more or less concentrated soil and sun. In due course Soronia would appear in the shadowy doorway (it would seem that the bird-songs were hushed as she crossed the court), and she would show you a vintage of especially long ago. After that, though you became a missionary in Shantung or a remittance-man in Tahiti, you would never forget the bouquet of the Rabeaut wines, the cantatas of the canaries, nor the witchery of Soronia's eyes.

If the little stone wine-shop were transplanted in New York, artists would find it, and you would be forced to fetch your own goblet, and have difficulty in getting in and out, for the crowd o' nights. Thither Constable and Breen made their way on this burning morning which Mrs. Stansbury darkened with her decision. The pair sat down in the cherished coolness, Constable at the little window, so that he could look at the mountain.

"Breen, I dare not leave them here for forty-eight hours, until the *Panther* comes," Constable said.

"Do you really think Pelée can't hold out that long?"

Constable shook his head impatiently. "I 'm not a monomaniac—

at least, not yet, Breen," he said, and his voice suggested the world of pent savagery in his brain. "The ways of volcanoes are past the previsions of men. I do not say that Pelée will blow his head off this week, or this millennium. I say I 'm afraid for this girl. I say there are vaults of explosives in that monster, the smallest of which could make this city look like a leper's corpse upon the beach. I say that the internal fires are burning high; that they are already fingering the vital cap; that Pelée sprung a leak last night, and that the same force which lifted this cheerful archipelago from the depths of the sea is pressing against the leak at this damnable instant. I say that Vesuvius warned before he broke; that Krakatoa warned and then struck; that down the ages these safety-valves scattered over the face of earth have trembled before giving way. Pelée is trembling now, and there is a woman here whose safety is—important to me. She is two miles away this moment, and I am as powerless as a man in a street-fight, with his lady's arms about him."

"Almost thou persuadest me to take up the reins of Revere," said Breen.

"What shall I do?"

"Peter, there is a short cut," Breen said, leaning forward half-humorously over the goblets of wine.

"Tell me!" Constable urged.

"Are you zealous and strong-souled?"

"Try me."

At this juncture Soronia entered the wine-shop from the little court of the song-birds, filling the eyes and the goblets of the Americans. A dark, ardent, alluring face; flesh like dull gold, made wonderful by the faintest tints of ripe fruit; eyes that could melt and burn and laugh; a fragile figure, but radiantly abloom, and as worthily draped as a young palm in a vine richly blossoming. Such, vaguely, was Soronia. She made one think of a strange, regal flower, an experiment of Nature, wrought in the most sumptuous shadow of a tropic garden. She was gone. Breen's face bore a drained look.

"An orchid—or a sun-lit cathedral window?" he whispered. "Will the visitation be repeated? Do I wake or sleep?"

"Old Père Rabeaut married a *fille de couleur,*" Constable observed.

"Some Daphne of the islands, she must have been, since Père Rabeaut does not seem designed to father a sunrise," Breen added, his eyes lost in the shadows of the court, from whence the bird-songs came.

"Père Rabeaut was a worthy soldier of France, I have heard," said Constable. "I have never seen the mother, but every year I have seen Soronia—for a moment like this. She was but a child when I came first—five years ago—but a radiant child even then."

"Five years ago," Breen mused. "Five years ago I had not ceased

to paint. I should have put her on canvas, and added unto the sins of the world."

There was a moment of silence, then Constable said in a low voice, "I must go back. Tell me the shorter way."

"Peter, you are a man, and she a woman. Forgive me, but I know what has sprung into your heart in the past twenty-four hours from the seeds that have been there five years. Tell her—tell her all about those five years and the one day—what they have meant to you, and your dream of the future. If you tell her mightily enough, she will follow you to the *Madame,* and cast no longing look behind! I shall stay here for an hour or two."

Constable left the wine-shop. He was very miserable, full of undirected wrath. Never in his life before had there been a time when a stiff shoulder, dollars, an athletic mind, or all three, had failed entirely to move an obstacle in his way. Here he was ground by impotence absolute. The suggestion of Breen entailed such a deep and vital thing that he dared not think of it, here in the glaring day, with the panting crowd about him. It was against the very structure of his mind to act precipitately in this, of all matters, most delicate. It is true that he meant now to win Lara Stansbury, if such a stately citadel lay within range of a man of his calibre; but he had vouchsafed to strike only after a flawless investment were laid.

Breen did not return for luncheon, and the name of Pelée was not heard. In his room, afterward, Constable fell asleep, with his face to the north. He awoke out of a horrid dream, in which black fingers were tightening, like a garrote, upon his throat. It was the ash and sulphur fumes again. Pelée was obscured by the fresh fog. Instantly, upon awakening, the old thoughts and dreads resumed their hateful swing in his brain. The sight of the *Madame,* lying out in the harbor, her needle-boom pointed like a black, fleshless finger across the smoky sunset, whipped him again to the sense of action which had no means of expression. Thoughts of the night—the locked doors, the still halls, the wail of children from the native cabins, sleeplessness without hope, vigilance without meaning, and this new master-romance shining far and bright and alone, like a brave star above wind-hurled clouds—out of these were moulded thoughts of little mercy, as the shadows grew long upon the whitening lawn.

Pelée's moods were variable that afternoon. The twilight brought ease again, and with the old freshness of evening came a glad hour of reaction. There was a rippling wave of merriment from the darky quarters, and a score of children went blithely forth to bathe in the sea. Never before was the volatile tropic soul so imperiously evidenced —simple hearts which glow at little things, whose swift tragedies come and go like blighting winds, which slay but leave no wound.

Constable was ashamed for the moment. Throughout the day his eyes had been fixed in stubborn gloom upon a cataclysm. Up the stairway, airily as laughter, came a bright melody from the piano. He was thrilled, and held, and his mind was stirred with tenderness. She was like her island people, quick to enter the groves of serenity when the black cloud had blown by. Could Breen be right? he thought. The suggestion appealed to him now in a new high-light. Were there not some words which had never yet found the ears of woman from the lips of man—some key to instant supremacy in the undiscovered country of a lovely woman's nature?

That instant, under the spell of soft music, Peter Constable knelt as in a dream to drink at the fountains of inspiration. The dinner-call aroused him. The music ceased, and he was again the faltering human lover. The path had been illumined only long enough to show him that there was a shorter way.

It seemed during dinner that Lara had something to say which the presence of the others forbade. Mrs. Stansbury went upstairs. Breen and the planter engaged in a smoky discussion of the literary peregrinations of one Herman Melville. The other two set out for the gardens.

"I have wanted to tell you since morning how sorry I am," she said quietly. "I want you to know that, in spite of mother's decision, I thank you for your kindness, and believe in your deeper knowledge of our danger."

"It's good of you to say that," he answered. "I never tried to persuade anybody to do anything before. This ordered-up-to-Nineveh business is out of my line. I may take Pelée too seriously, but I can't help it, with you folks here."

She laughed. "And I thought that nothing short of an actual eruption could disturb your equanimity."

"Did you ever read 'The Story of the Gadsbys'?" he asked.

"Yes."

"There is a big fragment of truth back of that. Do you think I would have played upon your imagination and nerves, and made a mess of things, if I had n't been afraid?"

"Afraid of the mountain? That's not like you. Are we about to see you down below in the city, warning the people, like Cassandra in the streets of Troy?"

"I have a dearer service—before going down into the city," he answered. It was as if Breen and the day's contemplation had made this moment inevitable. "That done, I could take up the work there with sleeves rolled up and bursting with anthems."

"What service?" she asked bravely, though the trend of his words was as black on white. She was startled, unready.

"To put you out of the range of Pelée's guns!" he said, with sudden vehemence.

She had scarcely divined that there lived a lover in this man. She felt futile beside him, and yet fused by his penetrating vitality. To her, it was the signal moment in which the woman discovers a giant besieger at her gates.

"They will hear you!" she found herself saying, in a half-stifled tone.

"Let them hear me. I want you to be safe. Pelée is no study to me now, but a grim warning—because you are here! I can't keep my eyes from the volcano, nor my thoughts from you. Don't you know—don't you know that you crept into the very heart of me—a bit of a girl, telling me how to live my life? Yesterday, when I found the mountain awake, all that I had ever done and thought and felt turned to nothing compared to your life. No matter what you think or say to me—I am afraid for you!"

The head bending toward her face seemed huge in the dark, and his lowered voice charged with power.

"But we will go to sea when the *Panther* comes," she said huskily.

"Lara!" The voice was from Mrs. Stansbury, in the upper window of the house—that calm, fateful voice.

"I must go!"

"Listen. I cannot bear to wait until the *Panther* comes!" he went on impetuously. "I want to put you safely ashore in Dominica this night—or Fort de France, or even on shipboard—and I will come back here. Do this for me, Lady!"

"Lara!" was called again.

"Yes, mother. . . . No, no, I could not go alone! There would never be a home here again. I must go to mother—oh, I cannot speak now!"

He stood alone in the dark. A lizard that had hearkened attentively, began to croak his comment to the mango trees.

V.

SLEEPLESSNESS ranged through Constable's brain again, and he gave the night to the old work of watching the mountain, and keeping the woman at hand. From time to time, before midnight, he heard the voice of Mrs. Stansbury. The girl was with her, but seemed to make no answer. The house was all his own. Through the lower hall to the music-room; out to the veranda, the garden-paths and drives; from the window that faced the north, in his own room, to the summit of the *Morne d'Orange* and the shadowy lawns; through ash-fog and windless moonlight,—he trod the night away. The hours fell asleep in passing; the moon drowsed for ages in the cloud-gardens; the stars dimmed,

disappeared, and trembled forth again, as they had been. It seemed left entirely to him that time passed; he had to grapple with the minutes one by one, and fight each back into the past.

At the side of the great house to the north there was a trellis heavily-burdened with lianas. Within, he found the orifice of an old cistern, partially covered by unfixed planking. He lifted the boards, and the moonlight shining through the foliage reflected in the water far below. A heavy wooden bar crossed the rim and was set stoutly in the masonry. Constable lit a match. His mind keenly grasped each detail. A rusty chain depended from the thick crosspiece. Slabs of stone from the side-walls were scattered over the bottom of the cistern. He dropped several ignited matches into the chamber, and determined to examine the place more thoroughly by daylight. From the native cabins came the sound of a dog barking. A shutter clicked in one of the upper windows of the plantation-house.

"There 'll be no doubt about it now," he thought grimly. "They 'll proceed at once to shut me up for being mentally irreclaimable."

That was a parched but brilliant dawning. The blinding charge from the east changed the dew to steam before it touched the ground. The more delicate blossoms were withered in the hectic burning when the sun was but an hour high. Lara's face was ashen and darkly-lined under the eyes. The night had been an evil one to her, evil with a struggle as yet unfinished.

"Peter, you 're pulling yourself down," said Uncle Joey after breakfast. "Don't take Pelée quite so seriously. Go to bed for a day, or, better still, steam the *Madame* out for a day's run and get some rest under the breezy awnings."

"What sort of a graven image do you think your sister's boy is, uncle?" Constable inquired. "I 'll get you folks out of the war-zone, or stay here until Pelée is cool—or a billion tons lighter."

"But don't you overestimate the chance of an eruption, Peter?"

"I have n't finished my mathematical calculations, my dear relative. Holy nuptials and capitals of hell!—I 've been all over this before. Take my word for it, and get set for a start when the mails come in to-morrow morning. You are all foolish virgins. I 'm going down below to see how your city flourishes in this furnace of a day. Who is the smug authority on *Les Colonies,* who undertakes to tell Saint Pierre editorially that there is no danger?"

"M. Mondet is the editor."

"I should relish considerably the pleasure of calking up the throat of M. Mondet with several sheets of his political conspiracies. I believe I shall call upon him."

"We look up to *Les Colonies* here, Peter. Remember this is not Montana."

"The tropics have enervated you, uncle. You need to be born again."

The hottest morning Saint Pierre had known for years! The *porteuses* were gone from the highways. Rue Victor Hugo, the principal thoroughfare, was deserted at ten in the morning. Shop doors were closed, the street-venders silent. Volcanic ash lay in all the crevices, and mingled with the turf. Behind the shut doors children wailed. The tough little mules, some in their panniers and with no one to lead them, hugged the east walls for shade. From the byways came faintly the smell of death. In the offices of *Les Colonies* Constable found a breath of coolness, for the outer air was admitted as little as possible. M. Mondet welcomed the caller. Constable explained his purpose, proffered a card, and apologized for his French.

M. Mondet was a tubby little man. His hands were white, soft, tapering, ringed. If you saw them alone, you would promptly uncover, as is customary in the proximity of a woman. M. Mondet did not forget his hands.

"Pelée has a bad look, monsieur," Constable began. "I believe you could clear the city of ten thousand people if you printed a vigorous warning against the mountain; if you ordered the natives to take no chances, but to flee, regardless of their coats, chickens, coals, coins, or their next city fathers. To be instrumental in saving the lives of ten thousand people is not a service given to all men, monsieur."

Constable spoke slowly, and was angered by the reply of the editor:

"But, my dear M. Constable, there is no danger—no danger, I assure you!"

"When did you get our earthly Ruler on the wire?" the American demanded.

"Ah, delicious humor, American humor! So rare among the islands—so lamentably rare!"

"Sir, this is not humor. This is tragedy—black, rumbling, naked tragedy! I say there is need for a giant here—a Saint Paul who would paint the possibilities of that monster in living fire! Good God! a man might die in the foulest gutter, cursed by the demons of drink and disease, but with a chant on his lips and 'vine-leaves in his hair,' if the memory of such a service as may be yours were with him at the last!"

"Your zeal is uplifting, my dear——"

"Be a Pilate, if you must—and wash your hands of the city's danger—but let there not be a white-lipped, kissing Judas at the last supper of Saint Pierre!"

The French editor found himself looking into a lean, tanned face that flushed and paled in turn. Moreover, he was uneasy on account of a pair of lean, tanned hands which lay lightly and restlessly upon

the knees of the man before him. These hands seemed to be the potent embodiments of hate and swiftness. The manner of their low leaping created the impression that their leashes were insecure, and the immaculate cravat of M. Mondet felt tight upon his throbbing throat.

"Perhaps it is well that you called," he said with haste, leading out his caller with the delicacy bred of the fear of dynamite.

Constable left, unsatisfied.

The clock in the *Hôpital l'Militaire* struck the hour of eleven. Constable slowly made his way to the water-front and back to the Sugar Landing. His launch was still waiting there at the stone pier. He had sent out word to Captain Negley for steam to be kept up night and day. A small crowd was gathering on the shore, slightly to the north of the Sugar Landing. Constable hurried thither. A black woman had fallen, from the sun. Her burdens lay together on the burning sand—a tray of cakes from her head, a naked babe from her arms. Constable had the stricken creature placed in the launch and taken out to his ship for care, sending a native doctor after her. The negroes regarded him with curious adulation. The water-front would know him when he came again.

"Oh, I say, friends of mine," he announced in French, "if any of you have sick wives or little ones, send them out to the ship yonder, and they will be cared for. No, it is not a hospital, where fees are charged—just a temporary refuge from the heat for the women and little ones. Tell your neighbors. Here is money to hire boats. I can crowd two hundred babes and mothers on board."

The thought of a breath of coolness turned his steps to Père Rabeaut's little stone wine-shop in the Rue de Rivoli. Light-headed from the heat, and the root of each hair prickling its individual warning, he ascended the terraces, and sank down in the darkness at last, in his old seat under the round window. The shop was quite deserted. Moments passed, as he fanned himself with his limp straw hat. A large piece of cardboard lay upon the table. He turned it over idly. A pencil sketch adorned the side which had lain against the wood. The realization was instantaneous that no common hand had wrought this work.

The figure was that of a grown girl—Soronia—and the attitude of expectancy brought out queerly the graceful and ardent lines of her figure. A wreath of blossoms was entwined in her hair, and an old French urn hung from her hand. The sketch seemed to be a series of happy after-thoughts, with not a line too much. As he studied it, with interest and curiosity, Constable became conscious of low voices in the court behind. He arose, with no idea of stealth, and stepped to the rear door.

Soronia and Hayden Breen were standing close together in the

denser shade at the far end of the court. The song-birds were stilled in the torrid noon. The girl's profile, a bewitching thing wrought of animated gold, was upturned to the eyes of Breen, and she was listening with soulful intent. Shy Soronia, mistress of the shadows, was called from her hiding-place at last to hearken unto the whisperings of an American. Her heart seemed to wait upon his words.

A smile crept over the face of the watcher. His feelings were strange indeed. Constable was thinking of a cluster of fresh and gorgeous grapes bending to hear the secrets of an old dry wine. . . . Yet there was a nobility in the figure of Breen, standing there among the huge banana-leaves! The watcher withdrew. The sketch upon the table reminded him that Soronia had revived the art, long-buried. Perhaps the vivid maiden had revived as well the lost youth of the world-jaded one. Constable departed, forgetting that he had come for wine.

The sky had become overcast. Pelée's cone was not visible from the streets. A sharp detonation cleaved the darkening air, and from the shut houses the answer issued, an answer partly stifled, but vibrant with fright—the quavering cries of age and childhood, sharp, low screams from the mothers, the sullen undertone of men. A subdued drumming came from the north now, completing the tossing currents of sound in the streets. All this was rubbed out instantaneously by a series of thunder crashes. A deluge of ash complicated the shroud of noonday, and the curse of sulphur pressed down. The highways filled magically with a crying, crouching, gray-lipped throng.

The American was running through the burned, poisoned air. A woman stretched out her hands to him as he passed. A mulatto youth fell in at his heels. Others followed. The white man was the sublimation of flight. Down the terraces to the Rue Victor Hugo the runners made their way, augmented as an avalanche gains weight and impetus. At the main thoroughfare, the seemingly maddened leader turned toward the *Morne d'Orange,* and staggered up the slope toward the plantation-house.

VI.

Constable remembered turning into the driveway after his terrific exertion; remembered that the girl and her mother were standing upon the veranda; that the former stretched out her hand to help him and the elder woman released a cutting remark. Then a servant brought a chair, and billows of nausea surged over him. Just as his consciousness waned, and he was launching, chair and all, into space, Lara's voice reached him again. . . . Then he was in the hallway, through some miracle, and insisting most uncommonly that he was not to be taken into the library, but into the music-room, because the windows there commanded the mountain.

He awoke to the interesting discovery that Miss Stansbury was fanning him. Presently she re-chilled a towel in the iced basin and folded it upon his forehead, now deliciously cool.

"It 's mighty sweet of you to take care of me this way," he muttered gratefully. "How is Pelée? How long have I been here? The last I remember, I was lost in the hall, and you found me."

"You 've been here about three hours, Mr. Constable. Pelée is quiet again, but the whole world is white outside—a perfect blizzard of ash has fallen! They say a terrible thing has happened at the extreme northern end of the city. The River Blanch overflowed her banks, and ran with boiling mud from the volcano. Thirty people are reported killed and the Usine Guerin destroyed."

She thought he was considering the disaster in the silence which followed, but in reality he was battling with the old problem.

"Miss Stansbury," he said finally, "is there anything a man possessed of full faculties could do, say, or bring about that would induce your mother to spend the night off-shore?"

She shook her head.

"You know that the *Madame* could be brought in for the mails to-morrow morning."

"I have taken the liberty to suggest that to mother," Lara replied. "She says that to-morrow will be time enough."

"Miss Stansbury, won't you put yourself in the care of Captain Negley to-night? I hope I 'm wrong, but the Guerin disaster may be only a preliminary demonstration—like the operator experimenting to find if it is dark enough to start the main fireworks. You know, I would stay ashore, and Negley is a good old man of the sea."

"Don't you understand, Mr. Constable?" she said, in real distress for denying him so repeatedly. "Don't you see that such a thing would bring down a miserable scene upon our heads? Besides, I am not thinking of my own safety as such a paramount thing. I don't want to be one of Job's lone survivors. Mother and Uncle Joey and you must go—when I do."

The pale, searching face regarded her. Again he was silent. His lips were shut, his eyelids half-closed. . . . A swift intuition was borne to the woman. He was about to renew the siege. She was not ready, and shrank from being moved to a decision which she had not formed in the privacy of her own mind. The last two days of suffering had rendered her strangely responsive to his mental actions. His quest had filled her brain with wonders, but they were not yet coalesced—impulses and inspirations without unity, unbound as yet by judgment. She wanted to yield with grace, if it came to that, but not to be overthrown. His hand reached for hers, but she drew away.

"Miss Stansbury——"

"Please don't say *it* now!" she whispered swiftly, her words startling herself quite as much as the man. "These are such dreadful hours! We must think of the crisis—only of that—putting behind all that passed last night!"

"Until?" said Constable, sitting up.

"Oh, who can tell? One knows—Mr. Constable, is n't it wicked of you to muddle me this way?"

A smile from him had given her the saving turn. The tension was eased. Now, as he held out his hand to her, she was not slow to accept it, or to miss the meaning of the compact.

"Pelée will be beyond the sky-line for us all pretty soon," he said cheerfully. "We 'll be very good pals in the meantime. Please go to the window and see how our ogre is faring—the giant who thinks he 's going to eat us when we 're prime—'member the fairy story? By the way, Miss Stansbury, did you ever have a set of billiard-balls cracking off caroms on your brain-pan?"

"Yes, and ten-pins. Men don't know head-ache matters. . . . The north is clearer, sir. A little while ago it was all a seething mass of blacks and grays."

An exclamation broke from her lips, and Constable joined her at the window. A dozen birds had fallen to the lawn from the eaves. Most of them were dead from the tainted air. The sight brought the situation more forcibly than ever to her mind.

"I should think the birds would fly away!" she said pityingly.

"Perhaps the mother-birds are waiting for mails to come in," suggested a voice behind them. Mrs. Stansbury was standing in the hall doorway.

A gracious rain cleared the air of early evening, and Constable settled himself for a further nap at the north window up-stairs. He had not realized his exhaustion, and was astonished to find that it was midnight when he awoke. He was stronger, but a cyclonic headache still oppressed him. Glad though he was for the hours passed, still he was by no means unappreciative of the chances he had taken. A forlorn hope of saving the lady, even though a destroying eruption overtook them at the plantation-house, had grown in his mind since the night before. To be caught asleep would render this chance a far one.

The Guerin disaster might be considered among the promises of a favorable issue, as well as a forerunner of chaos. The mountain's overflow into the River Blanch might have eased the pressure upon the craters. There was no authority nor precedent for such a hope. If Pelée's fuse were burning shorter and shorter toward a Krakatoan cataclysm, it was not for man to say what spark would shake the world. Still, Constable held the hope.

He turned on the lights in the room. A cablegram had been slipped under the door. It proved to be an answer to a message he had sent to Basse Terre in the morning, regarding the movements of the *Panther*.

Str. *Panther* arrived and departed here on time.

he read. There was strength in the word. The mail liner reasonably might be expected to call at Martinique with the dawn, according to schedule. The mails should be ready for distribution at nine.

"We'll have luncheon aboard the *Madame* to-morrow," Constable mused, "and while the blessed maiden is passing cake and pouring tea, the *Madame* will be running like a scared deer, to hitch herself to the solid old Horn, built of rock and sealed with icebergs! God!—what a clean thought!"

He helped himself to a glass of wine, and shaded his eyes at the window, staring beyond the city into the ashen shroud—Pelée's flag of truce. "Grand old martyr," he murmured devoutly. "Hang on, hang on!"

There was a tap at the door, and Breen was admitted.

"Peter," he said, eying the glass in the other's hand, "have you heard what becomes of secret sippers?"

"Yes, they die many deaths and go to—a place like Saint Pierre. I am glad you have come, since I will not have to drink alone. What can a man do when his friend deserts him? I have n't seen much of you in the past three æons, miscalled days."

"It is true. I have felt my own inconsequence in the presence of the big drama here. It is your drama, Peter. Then, I have found a place of many marvels."

"Père Rabeaut's?"

"None other. There are vintages there which I did not believe were ever allowed to reflect the light outside of Paris. Also, there is something like coolness in this thrice-burned isle. Also a maiden creature, half child, half woman, wholly wonderful."

"I have been glad to see you make the best of things. Of course one can never tell on a cruise where one is to encounter a series of business obligations—such as here."

"True again," Breen said gravely.

"Can you imagine our first parents occupying themselves during the first tornado?" Constable resumed. "Our dear initial mother, surpassingly wind-blown, driving the geese to shelter, propping up the orchards, getting out the rain-barrels, and tightening tent-pins?"

"Vividly."

"I have been just as busy as that, but have accomplished nothing. Seriously, Breen, times are running close. Guerin's the first volley.

To think I haven't been to the mountain; have n't taken a photograph or a note! My fellow researchers in things seismic will never forgive me for this. Great gods! Breen, I thought I had a scientific mind—thought that even though I bulled in all else, I was a loyal geologist; but I have betrayed even that decent instinct. Another man would have had the women away to sea and be attending the mountain now; but here I am, a child with man's tools, gassing the night through, and she—across the hall—marked, for all I know, for Pelée's own! It 's damnably good to talk, though."

"There 's only one way when words fail, Peter. If the mountain won't recede from the maiden, you must snatch up the maiden and make a get-away from the mountain."

"I 'm not pirate enough, Breen," Constable replied wearily. "By the way, I 'm sending some of the natives of the city—the women with babes—out to the *Madame* for cool air. There is no reason in the world why we should n't entertain our friends of the wine-shop. Soronia is too rare a creature to be immolated by Pelée's bursting boilers. She and the *Père* might just as well share the benefits. You see, the presence of others makes it possible. Attend to it, will you?"

"Good old Peter," Breen said softly; "but I don't think they would come. Who 'd feed the little song-birds?"

"Have her bring the birds along. They 'll die there!"

"I had planned not to go to the little wine-shop again, Peter."

Constable turned upon him abruptly. "Why?" said he.

"You see, Peter, she is such a rare little soul—asking so little and so ready to give her all for the promise of a man—think of it. I have found a good many playthings, pottering around this little sun-shot planet—clear little films they are now, which stick in the brain and won't fade. Let me alone, Peter, and I 'll wander back to reason presently. A very ugly album is a sinner's memory, and when it is quite full the sinner usually dies—sometimes off Brooklyn piers. The truth is, I found a shred of conscience developed under your culture and Pelée's heat; and so I refused another plaything, refused to crowd another film into that sullied album of mine. I lied, said I did n't understand that admiration meant anything to her—and went away. Not too late, I trust. Hearn declares the *fille de couleur* to be a natural optimist, and slow to lose faith in mankind. My parable is ended. Give me wine."

Constable believed that Soronia had found her first lover in Breen, and he pitied the heart so suddenly impassioned and so swiftly dethroned of its dream. He remembered the face of Soronia in the court shadows, and his pity lingered.

"As a rule," he said, "one can rely upon the studies of Hearn among the daughters of color."

They talked until the *Panther* lights shone afar in the offing, misty with dawn and volcano fog; then parted for an hour's rest. Constable was the first below, and there was little joy with the coming of the day. The rumblings of the mountain were renewed. The great tower of ash shot up yesterday was still falling; the trees and shrubbery in the gardens were bent with the weight of white; indeed, many branches were broken. The dismal bellowing of cattle and the stamping of ponies were heard from the barns. It was only by keeping the doors and windows of the house tightly shut that living was bearable. The native who brought the copy of *Les Colonies* wore a thick wet rag over his nostrils, and had the appearance of having freshly emerged from a bin of cement. Constable and Breen were first in the breakfast-room.

"He's a man-servant of the devil, this pudgy editor," Constable declared savagely, as he read the morning paper. "Yesterday I called upon him and in sweet modesty and limping French explained the proper policy for him to take. To-day he devotes a half-column of insufferable humor to my force of character and extreme views."

Constable translated Mondet's account of the Guerin disaster, and his assurances of the safety of Saint Pierre, so far as the mountain was concerned. "Oh, the flakiness of that French mind!" he exclaimed. "With a volcano in the pangs of dissolution, towering over the city, this fulsome editor is on his knees, apparently in dread of an earthquake! . . . 'Where on the island,' thus he inquires editorially, 'could a more secure place than Saint Pierre be found in the event of an earthquake visitation?'"

Constable crushed the paper in his hand. He glanced at his watch and then at the mountain, from a habit now graven deeply.

"The northern end of Saint Pierre is flooded out like an ant-hill under a kettle boiling over," he capitulated thoughtfully. "The mountain is gathering for another demonstration. Let us flee with all despatch to the craters of the volcano, to escape this hypothetical earthquake! M. Mondet certainly enthralls me. I must call upon him again. . . . Breen, is there any way to stimulate the distribution of the *Panther* mails?"

VII.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast Constable drove down to the city to send out final orders to Captain Negley, and attend certain matters having to do with the *Madame's* facilities for entertainment. Uncle Joey was to go for the mails. If he could prevent, Constable was minded that there should be no hitch nor tangle at the last moment. In spite of darkish apprehensions, his heart would burst now and then into singing, since he asked but two hours more of old Pelée, upon whose summit was now written in lightning and black cloud the ominous letters of Disaster.

The ladies were left to such graceful ministrations of Breen as were found needful. Mrs. Stansbury, having gained her point, imposed no further delays. The eagerness of the daughter was controlled, but in no way concealed. The past three days had left a pallor upon her face, and shadows under her eyes, but the innate fineness of her features seemed intensified rather than diminished by physical suffering, and the more subtle perturbations of the inner woman.

"When a strain brings out the splendor of a woman's face, mark her well for a thoroughbred," Breen had found occasion to whisper to his friend. The sentence was soul's refreshment, as Breen intended it to be.

Constable, indeed, was contemplating the full significance of the words, and their possible bearing upon his present and future, as he rode down the *Morne d'Orange* into the Rue Victor Hugo. The little black carriage of Father Damien was approaching, and, gripped by a sudden idea, Constable halted it, saying to the elder spirit of the parish, whom he had met at the plantation-house: "Father, take this two thousand francs and use it for the maintenance of the homeless refugees in Fort de France. I shall see that more funds get to you to-day."

A little way further, another carriage approached, one of the public conveyances of the city this time. Behind the driver loomed the head and shoulders of a white man—hard head and broad shoulders—the sight of whom struck the music from the brain of Constable, as a knife that is slashed across the strings of a harp. Both vehicles stopped abruptly.

"Well, I 've got you," the broad individual remarked cheerfully. "Where 's the other fellow?"

Let it be known that the man whom Constable now faced was the same energetic person who occasioned discord on the Brooklyn pier, just as the *Madame* swung blithely forth into the harbor. Constable was thinking very rapidly. He felt prepared to commit murder rather than have his plans for the morning thrust aside.

"The other fellow?" he repeated gently.

"The man hidden in your cabin when you cleared. His name is Nicholas Stembridge, if you don't happen to know," the stranger said, with some impatience. "Where is he?"

"Where you saw him last," Constable said, with sudden cordiality; "and I want to state that I 'm glad to see you—that is," he added doubtfully, "if you 've come to take him away. If you 've looked me up, you 'll have found that I 'm usually ready to pay in money, hide, or liberty, for the mistakes I make."

"I guess that 's right, too. So you had to lock up Stembridge?"

"Yes, I found it advisable one day after he had tried to steal the ship—while I was ashore in San Juan," Constable explained

ingenuously. "I 'm devilishly glad you came, because it will save me from taking him back. That is, unless you decide that I 'll have to go back, too. I did play pretty rough with you, but your man had me going strong about that time. You 've got to acknowledge that he 's an artist. Let 's get out of this hell. What do you plan to do?"

"Go out and get Stembridge, and settle with you."

"The word 'settle' usually refers to dollars up in the States," Constable said delicately.

"It does n't pay to buck the detective bureau, Constable, but I 'm —authorized to take cash for your part—this time."

"How much?"

"Five thousand dollars and expenses."

"It costs money to keep you off one's ship."

"I 'm Crusoe of the detective bureau, and I usually go where I please," was the dulcet answer.

"I 'll have to go out to the ship to get so much money," Constable declared resignedly.

"I 'll have to go out to the ship to get Stembridge," said Crusoe. "We 'll go together."

"Where are your men?"

"I 'm working alone this trip."

"You can pick up a couple of gendarmes to help you, if you think you 'll need help," Constable suggested. This was the galvanic instant.

Crusoe glanced at him keenly. He had been able to pick no flaw in the moment's talk. He was a shrewd man in his line and schooled, but Constable had rung true. There is no inclination on the part of the public at large to concede brilliance of acumen to the heirs of millions, unless the sparkling quality has been exposed in a strong light. The suggestion concerning the gendarmes, and a last glance into the face of the young man, vanquished Crusoe's final doubt.

"I can handle Stembridge very tidily, having your moral support," he declared. "He 's too old a bird to resist arrest when he 's once cornered."

"Just as you say," Constable said swiftly. "Turn your rig about and follow on. My launch is ahead, at the Sugar Landing."

It was not until the other was behind, and the back of his own carriage shutting off the view, that Constable realized he had lost his headache, and was drenched with perspiration. It was now eight. The ladies had agreed to be ready at nine, in case Uncle Joey had returned with the mail by that time. His several errands must wait. The present matter would take the entire time, and must be done decently and in order. The driver was commanded to make good speed to the launch, which was in readiness. Crusoe dismissed his rig; Constable bade his driver wait, and the two men boarded.

"Make her buzz, Ernst," the owner said to the sailor in charge. "I 'm expiring for a drink and a mouthful of clean air."

Crusoe was deeply interested in the present manifestation of Martinique's climate, and was not readily diverted to the subject which challenged his companion. Once launched, however, upon the dealings of Nicholas Stembridge, alias Hayden Breen, he became fluent, and Constable learned that his guest was "the Rajah's Diamond" among the swindlers of civilization.

Stembridge, according to Crusoe, had started a Central American revolution in order to seize a range of rich silver hills; had made good, worked the mines, and sold them, a year later, "salted to a brine," to a syndicate of New York capitalists. He had engineered the Yarmouth-Leams oil syndicate which disordered London financiers for a day. Of these and other interesting engagements Constable learned as the launch sped across the fouled harbor.

"What does this prince of manipulators do with all his money?" he asked finally.

"Well, you see," Crusoe replied, "he has his army to pay, and he must pay the men pretty well, for the rumor is abroad that they would go on the cross for him. And then he is a golden glory of a spendthrift. I 've heard that Paris looks for his second coming as for a Messiah, since he has promised the Tenderloin a punch from the Milky Way. . . . Here we are. Perhaps you don't think I was pleased to see your craft lying here this morning when I came in on the *Panther?*"

"I presume you were," Constable replied idly.

They were on the ship's ladder, Crusoe walking ahead. The sailor above, on the main-deck of the *Madame,* caught a strange gesture from Constable's hand, and a stranger expression from the eye of his owner. The sailor did not understand exactly, but he stood ready for anything that might occur, and accordingly made haste to assist when Constable sprang forward and pinioned the new-comer about the waist. Crusoe accepted his defeat nervily, but when his gun was removed and his wrists enclosed for the time-being in his own manacles he regarded his captor with eyes of hate, in which a little reproach was mingled.

"What 's your lay, Constable?" he inquired almost steadily. "You 're smarter than I thought, and a deal more crooked."

"Listen," the other said hurriedly. "I did n't like to do this, but there was n't any way out of it. I 've got a lot on my mind this morning, and you complicated matters. It may be that I 'm saving your life. The mountain yonder looks as if he were about to blow his brains out, and I could n't be interrupted until I got certain ladies safely aboard here from the town. As for the fascinating person you call Stembridge, he may be my guest, and he may not. I 'll see you about that later on. He's been square as a plumb-line to me. You 're a good

man, Crusoe, and Breen is, too. Your lines are different, that 's all. You 'll get your five thousand that I promised to-day. Just sit tight, and call for anything you want. We 'll be good friends yet. . . . Captain Negley, have Mr. Crusoe quartered pleasantly aft, and tell Macready to serve him with anything he desires. I 'll be back with the ladies in about an hour. You 'll, of course, have the ship keyed for a sprint to Fort de France."

Constable hurried down the ladder, and an instant later was again in the launch, which was aimed at the low-hanging pall, back of which lay the tortured city. It was now twenty-five minutes to nine. He could make the plantation-house slightly after the hour.

It was but a moment from the pier to the carriage, and then the half-strangled ponies struggled gallantly through Rue Victor Hugo and up the *morne* toward the plantation-house. Uncle Joey's rig was at the gate, good evidence that the mails had been brought.

Constable entered the house hastily at ten minutes past nine. There was a word of cheer upon his lips. No one was in the library or the music-room; no one but a maid-servant was on the lower floor. She was gathering up the litter of broken envelopes and newspaper wrappings upon the library table. Constable imagined that the maid-servant regarded him strangely. He ran to the stairway and called:

"Are you almost ready, ladies?"

He heard foot-steps above and low voices; then a door opened and Mrs. Stansbury crossed the upper hall and appeared at the head of the stairway. Already he was filled with a confusion of alarms.

"Pardon me for calling you, but everything is ready—as soon as you can come."

"We are not going on your yacht, Mr. Constable," the elder woman said coldly.

He sprang up the stairs and faced her in the dim light. Two or three times in his life he had become cold like this, some trait of his breed equipping him with an outward calm, when the issue of the moment was won or lost, but lifted from his hands.

"What is the latest difficulty, please?"

"I would rather not discuss the matter, Mr. Constable."

"May I speak with Miss Stansbury?"

It was not given to the mother to accede or refuse, for the door behind her was opened and the girl stood in the aperture, her anguished eyes intent upon him.

"I returned to announce that everything is ready," he said quietly, "and your mother tells me that you are not going."

"No, we are not going," she repeated in a lifeless voice.

"Is it too much for me to ask why?"

She did not answer at once, but seemed trying to penetrate his

brain with her eyes. "Then, you have not seen the New York papers?" she said. "You may have this. The others are below."

She handed him the front page of a daily journal, dated three weeks before. His own name was there, and not in honor. When he looked up from the paper the door was shut. Constable went below.

"Where is Mr. Wall?" he dully inquired of the maid-servant.

"He went out to the plantation, sir, immediately upon bringing in the mails."

"Where is Mr. Breen?"

"He went down to the city, sir."

Constable left the house and walked rapidly out the driveway, turning toward Saint Pierre. Here the man's pride intervened. He had committed a folly, perhaps, but no broad evil. The statements of the press were farcical. Lara Stansbury should not have allowed her mother and the New York reporters to shake her trust. With reaction piling upon him its most bitter and tragic phases, Peter Constable conceded his failure as a lover, and turned to his secondary passion—Pelée.

VIII.

Breen was not wholly unconscious of danger when the large bundle of New York papers was brought with the mails into the library. The ladies had busied themselves over a joint epistle from Mr. Stansbury, and were scanning the front pages of the journals, when a sudden exclamation from Mrs. Stansbury intimated the ugly truth. Breen was changed from guest to outlaw. Miss Stansbury followed her mother up-stairs, the former bearing the paper with her. A second account of the demoralizing incident was not difficult to find. Breen read the following hastily:

> The *Madame de Stael*, Mr. Peter Constable's splendid private yacht, cleared for West Indian ports this morning, having on board the young millionaire-owner and, it is alleged, Nicholas Stembridge, the notorious revolutionist, adventurer, and swindling promoter.
>
> The purpose in common of the capitalist and fortune-hunter cannot be told. Mr. Constable has figured in the public prints on several occasions, but chiefly through his eccentric ideas of practical philanthropy. So far as is known, he has never before allowed himself to be subjected to the attention of the police. It is feared that he will lose at both ends as a result of his present affiliations.
>
> Mr. Constable's friends aver that the young millionaire could not have understood the character of his companion for the voyage, and point out that Nicholas Stembridge, at his best, is a man of fascinating manners and rare personal accomplishments. It has been added also that Mr. Constable is of a most impulsive temperament, and apt to choose his companions from queer arteries of society. The young man's innocent intent, however, might more readily be accepted, were it not for the important fact that Nicholas Stembridge, who is known

> to have been in hiding for several days in New York, was seen on board the *de Stael* shortly before she sailed; positively recognized, it it said, by an astute and reliable member of the local detective force.

A spirited description of the episode on the Brooklyn pier followed; also a portion of Nicholas Stembridge's police record. The conservative character of the paper in which the foregoing appeared led Breen to believe that the account which had fallen into Mrs. Stansbury's hand might be considerably more emblazoned and embellished. His first thought was that he had become a source of horror to the women, and that he must put himself out of their sight.

Breen was not a conscienceless man. A fatalist, a spendthrift, a power that preyed upon the powers that prey, a polished reveller—all these he might be, but his blood was clean from the taint of personal treachery. He had come to like Constable. The friendship was guileless. He had even thought, with a trace of humor in certain moments, that it was worth being called back from the Brooklyn pier for such a large and clear emotion. It is possible that he had never in his life been troubled as now, having brought a vital hurt to the man he wished only to serve. His face showed nothing, not even the heat of the day, as he left the house.

His own body had felt all, even the moral dissolution which crawls into the brain to prepare a place for the sinister guest, suicide. The law of cause and effect, unable to find any hold upon himself nor inspire any fear this side of death, had linked him with another, and made that other suffer through him. Breen was smitten with the ugliest punishment that clean fibre is given to writhe beneath—that of seeing a friend beaten to the ground by the rebounding volley of one's own sins.

Half-way down the *Morne d'Orange,* he saw Constable's launch turn shoreward from the ship. Constable was probably aboard. Breen was n't ready yet to meet the man he had hurt. He must think. Moreover, by no means did he ignore the possibility of the *Panther* bringing one of his logical enemies, nor was he ready to face an accumulation of consequences in the shape of a man-hunter. He turned to the right at the base of the *morne,* and made his way up one of the winding paths to the terraced streets. That his steps led him to the wine-shop, where he had planned not to go again, seemed now but a paltry addition to the incubus which had so suddenly possessed him.

At the first terrace he turned and stared back through the smoke. The launch had just touched the pier at the Sugar Landing. The tall figure of Constable stepped forth and hastened to the carriage, which was driven rapidly toward the *morne.* Breen smiled, because it was easier for him to smile than to cry for mercy. Constable was being driven swiftly to the plantation-house, where he would find the ugly

work that had been done there. Mrs. Stansbury would not board a ship that had been a thief's refuge.

Rue de Rivoli was white and empty. The door of the wine-shop was shut but not locked, and the little round window darkened with a cloth. Breen entered, slamming the door quickly, to keep out the hot, poisoned air of the street. The dark shop was as empty of humans as the thoroughfare, but a quick step sounded in the rear. Père Rabeaut entered from the ash-quilted court.

"*Mon Dieu,* what a day, M. Breen—a day of judgment! The birds are dead and dying. Soronia is ill unto death——"

"Soronia ill!" Breen said under his breath. Scarcely were the words uttered when a cry was heard from the living-rooms beyond the court.

"Get me some wine quickly, Père Rabeaut—the Épernay vintage," Breen commanded.

The old man hastened away. At the rear doorway, Soronia pushed by him. Her hair was unfastened, and the loose white garment that she wore was open at the throat. The father stared as if she were a spectre. His lips moved, and he turned suddenly to the man standing in front of the shop.

"Go and get M. Breen's wine, father," the girl ordered. Closing the door upon him, she moved toward the American.

Her eyes aroused him. The darkness had no power to divest them of expression, for the passions were burning there—fear lest this was not flesh which filled her gaze; ecstasy in that he was there at all, in life or death or dream. His act of yesterday had wrought the ghastly pallor; the deathly illness was heart-starvation. In his studies of the *fille de couleur,* Hearn had not reckoned with a heart like Soronia's. She touched his shoulder and his cheek with chilling hands; there fell from her lips strange, low words of no language that he knew. Suddenly she caught his hand to her breast, whispering that she had feared she was dreaming.

"What were you dreaming, little one?" he questioned.

"I thought I was dying when I heard your voice. You said—you said you would come no more."

"But did I not come, little fairy? Who could remain away from you?"

She seized his face in her cold hands, whispering, "Do you mean that you will stay?"

Here was another issue of Nemesis, the curse of another life through his coming back from the edge of the water. In the crush of self-hate, he smiled at the woman. . . . Until a moment ago the wrecking work of the morning had put thoughts of Soronia from his mind. He had come to the wine-shop partly to marshal his final resources in an

out-of-way spot and arrange the last line of action, and partly to avoid the possibility of arrest for the moment in case the *Panther* had brought an emissary of the law. His end was a matter of hours at best; his cruising and his friendship with Constable were over. Saint Pierre, of the lesser islands, was the last station of his travelling. During three days he had passed many hours in the wine-shop. What those hours had accomplished was dramatically revealed now in the anguish of the maiden as she waited for the answer to her question.

"I have been thinking a great deal since yesterday. I found that I could n't do what I tried—at least, without seeing you again, Soronia." Breen spoke vaguely. He had sufficient honesty not to be deft with the forces he was now employing. "The future, I cannot tell yet. I may have to leave Saint Pierre for awhile, but I shall leave my heart here, and if I live—I will come back! To-day I must see my friend and tell him that I cannot cruise farther south with him. . . . Bring the wine quickly, Père Rabeaut. Mademoiselle Soronia is very weak still."

She would have fallen had he not held her, but her eyes were shining. The old man poured the wine and ran for further restoratives. Breen would have put the girl into a chair, but she clung to him.

"I have waited for you so long, my maker of pictures," she whispered.

Père Rabeaut stood beside them with medicines. The veneer of wine-shop servitude was gone from the gray old face. The sharp black eyes were directed steadily upon the stranger, who saw that they were ready to soften or burst into flame. Breen saw, too, that he was less in the presence of the father of a creole girl of Martinique than the father of an old-world household.

"I am waiting for you to speak, monsieur," said Père Rabeaut.

"You have not waited long, sir," Breen answered. "It was just an instant ago that I had the honor of hearing from your daughter's lips—that she would wait for me until I could come back permanently to Saint Pierre."

"Let us drink the wine of Épernay, sir. I know you will forgive an old soldier of France. So many people do not understand—don't try to understand—that I deemed it a privilege to *marry* the mother of the maid in your arms—a privilege, not because a governor-general of Martinique was her father—that was her misfortune—but because she was worthy the worship of an old soldier of France. The girl is like her mother, monsieur."

"It is an honor I do not deserve, sir—the daughter of a countrywoman of Josephine and a soldier of France," said Breen, grateful that one of his utterances contained or covered no lie.

The bow from the veteran was a gracious thing. He held a glass to the lips of his daughter.

"I do not need wine now, father," Soronia said softly.

There was a knock at the door. The maid hastened to her room, and Père Rabeaut, once more the master of the wine-shop, greeted a gasping patron. Breen was left to his thoughts. . . . That which he had done was unchangeable.

"Nicholas Stembridge, rejoice! this is your wedding day!" he muttered. "What a time you 've had down the years! You have lived long and freely, taking what you saw and daring consequences and prattling like a defective to keep up your spirits! Nick, do you recall the prime sentence of your philosophy—'There is nothing which Doctor Death cannot cure'? Is n't it a wonderful saying? So wonderful that it has exceptions! No, Death will not put Peter and his lady out to sea! Many deaths of yours will not restore to this poor child the heart you have rifled—Intrepid Reasoner! . . . The police are after you; your lips are hot with lies; you have run from the friend you outraged! Sit in the gloom and sip wine—with more groan-stuff than Pelée in your vitals! Nick Stembridge, you are whipped, cornered. You go out a coward and a liar. Where is your laugh of yesterday?"

And yet he smiled at the perfection of the pride-humbling trap the Fates had laid for him this day; smiled at the words he had uttered to Soronia and her father—the old wine-server with the subservient crook in his back, who had bristled into a soldier of France.

And yet there had been no other way. After what he had done to Constable, it was not in him to deprive Soronia of what she seemed to need—not under her pitiful eyes! His own part did not enter. He conjured no golden haze as the mate of this creature of ardor, fragrance, and gentleness. Nor, on the other extreme, did he reflect that to spend one's days in a torrid wine-shop with a woman of black blood was a fitting end for a brutalized life. Had she been the last and least of *les blanchisseuses,* he was not fit.

He drank the old wine, put the woman out of his mind, and turned to the sorry business of the wounded friend. He must find Constable and say the last words; then take the blame from his friend in the presence of the women. If he were taken into custody on the way—there was no help for that. All remnants of justice and white-manship demanded that he set out at once. He finished the wine and hurried to the court.

"Soronia," he called, "I 'll have to go now. Mr. Constable expects to leave with his ship to-day, and I must talk with him before he goes."

She appeared in the dress in which he had first seen her. There were tender remonstrances which he scarcely heard, but he answered gently. His mind was with the man.

"And you will be back this afternoon?"

In the hollow of the universe there seemed no reason that he could

utter why he should not be back that afternoon. "Yes, little fairy," he answered.

"And I shall watch from the upper window, if the smoke clears, for your friend's ship to sail. . . . Ah, don't stay long from me!"

The sun could not shine through the ash-fog which shut out the harbor distances and shrouded the great cone, but volumes of dreadful heat found the earth. Though the *Madame* lay well in the harbor, she was invisible now, even from the terraces. There was no line dividing the shore from the sea, nor the sea from the sky. It was all an illimitable mask, whose fabric was the dust which had lain for centuries upon Pelée's dynamos.

There was no carriage for hire. The day had driven the public-drivers to cover. Breen walked to the plantation-house. The servant was long in answering his ring. Mr. Wall was in the hallway. The fall from guest to an enemy of the house pulled hard upon Breen's philosophy.

"Come in, sir," said Uncle Joey. His tone was repressed as he added: "Had I known your address, I should have sent your effects to you."

"I was n't thinking about that, but looking for Mr. Constable," Breen declared.

"You are Nicholas Stembridge?"

"Yes."

The elder man stared at him savagely. "Don't you think you have done that young fool enough damage?"

"More than enough, Mr. Wall; but there remains, from my point of view, an unfinished sentence."

"He is not here."

"Then I need trouble you no further."

Breen had not the heart that instant to ask to see the ladies. At the pier he learned from Ernst, who had charge of the launch, that Mr. Constable was not aboard the ship, and had given up the idea of sailing for the day, apparently. At the Roxelane, Breen found that Constable had made his way beyond toward the River Blanch, which had flowed black and boiling yesterday. At the *Hôtel des Palms* there was definite word of M. Constable, American. The proprietor bore witness that the gentleman had stopped at the establishment long enough to procure food, brandy, mules, and guides—the last at great cost, since the natives were in deadly fear—for a trip to the craters of Pelée.

IX.

THE morning which broke through the defenses of Breen, and crumpled the dearest purpose of Constable, also drew Miss Stansbury into the vortex of intense emotions. Whatever dominant traits and

impulses she had inherited from her mother, it had been her self-training to repress. Ample opportunity had been afforded her to note in her mother the career of an indomitable mistress of affairs. The result of her observations was a positive distaste for stiffness of views in any sphere, and a conviction that the display of masterfulness in woman did not make for woman's happiness.

As a girl, it had not occurred to Lara to exert an authority counter to her mother's. When she became a young woman she carefully avoided any extremity which might lead to the breaking of either her own or the more visible will of the house.

Now, in the midst of painful developments, it was borne home to Lara that she had progressed too far in the way of amiability; that she had unconsciously outstripped her intention, and passed into the boundaries of self-effacement. In the crisis of the newspaper revelations, she had followed her mother's initiative without question. The creature of indecisions that she had become grew more and more odious to her as the forenoon passed, and in her contrition she realized that the man whose first wish was to spare her from harm had been repaid with a lack of courtesy and a greater lack of courage.

Nothing that she had said or done, it seemed to her now, carried the stamina of decision. She had implored him not to speak; she had run from him, like a frightened child to her mother, when he had told his love and begged her to seek safety aboard his ship. In none of her dealings had she shown the strong womanhood which marked her ideals; and in singular contrast stood out his graciousness and patience. The thousand little things in which she had subserved her own inclinations to the maternal will had dulled the delicate point of personality, without which a man cannot stand valiantly through the crux of harsh days. It was all plain now, so hideously plain.

The chief of the acts she regretted had to do with the morning itself. What manner of "friendship" was this which accepted as authoritative the testimony of a newspaper's suspicions? She had done more than this, in handing Constable the document that witnessed against him, and shutting the door upon his possible defense. There was an added poignancy in the knowledge that her mother would not have thus used one of her favorites. Her distaste for the American caused Mrs. Stansbury so readily to accept newspaper evidence as a triumph of her judgment. As if such thoughts of wretchedness were not sufficient to start tears of vexation, Lara's mind finally added to the inventory of its miseries by reverting to her conversation with Constable in the carriage on the day of his arrival. How she had berated the essayist for declaring that the stuff of friendship stirred not womankind! How vigorously he had agreed with her!

She sought her own room when the tumult mounted to the point

of tears. Presently she went to the door and locked it, for the inevitable thought had come. What did the name of Peter Constable mean to her? She had felt his strength. Long ago she had dreamed of such strength and put the dream away. Whether or not he was to be the conqueror, she knew that mastery *like* his could rouse her heart. She was evading the substance of the question. Before the mirror she frowned severely at the Lara there.

"Tell me this," said the woman, "do I want him to go away?"

"No, no!" said the image.

"No," repeated the woman; "not if he be innocent."

The image scowled at her conservatism. "You deserve to suffer. You sent him away without a tithe of your trust, without a morsel of your mercy."

Standing in the upper hallway, she heard what passed between Breen and the planter at the front door. Why did not Uncle Joey demand extenuating circumstances? She was sure that Breen would have dropped some hint, at least, of Constable's part in the mysterious alliance, had it not been for the barbed iron of the other's words. Lara's palms ached from the pressure of her nails.

She did not go down-stairs to luncheon, but often crossed the hall, entering Constable's room to look at the mountain and cityward along the smoky highway. In one of these watches she saw the little black carriage of Father Damien approaching. He would have driven by, but she ran below and called to him from the veranda:

"Come in and rest a minute, father. Is there any good to tell?"

"Very little, Lara. The gray curse is on Saint Pierre, indeed. I have grown afraid for my people, and am warning them to seek refuge in Fort de France. Your guest suggested this step, and has helped nobly with money to care for the people fleeing to the capital."

She drew from him an account of his meeting with Constable on the highway in the morning. He told her, too, how the young man had sent sick native mothers and their children out to the ship for refuge from the heat and sulphur fumes, and of the large sums of money he had volunteered for the care of the favored few who fled to Fort de France. Lara bent her head forward toward the priest.

"And what do you think of this man, father?" she questioned suddenly.

The old man's mild gaze fell before the glowing eyes of the girl. "I did not think when I first met him that he was gifted with such zeal," he answered weakly.

"Where is he now, Father Damien?"

"That I cannot tell, dear. We have not seen him since morning. Some say that he has gone to *Morne Rouge;* others that he has ascended to the craters of Pelée."

She sprang up, but repressed the exclamation upon her lips. Her mother had entered.

"Good morning, Father Damien," Mrs. Stansbury said pleasantly. "Is Lara rehearsing private theatricals for you?"

The priest made haste to depart, saying that he was on the way to Fort de France with the money Constable had given, to make the refugees there as comfortable as possible. The ladies followed him to the door. It happened that the old man faced Lara as he said:

"I hope it may be a false rumor that your friend has sought the craters of Pelée. Such services as his we cannot afford to do without. There is power in the man——"

"I think I have felt it, father," the girl answered quietly.

"What does this mean, this talk of 'friend' in connection with the *confrère* of a thief?" Mrs. Stansbury asked.

"I did not quibble in the use of the word——"

"Do you count as a friend one who would try to put you aboard a ship which bears the reputation of the *Madame de Stael?*—one who would bring to our house the notorious Nicholas Stembridge?"

"You were also invited to go, remember."

"My dear child, you are overwrought. I cannot believe that you are appealed to by this sudden interest of his in your welfare; nor that you dreamed of accepting terms that would have frightened our Domremy saint who braved wars."

"I do not like your talk of terms, mother. There were no terms. Mr. Constable asked me to board his ship, that I might be safe. His care for my welfare is not important in this talk."

"Do you think you would be safe to go with him?"

"Safe as the sea—safe as the black women and their babies now crowded upon the terrible *de Stael!* I do not care to talk further. You have followed your inclinations regarding Mr. Constable, and until now I have allowed your inclinations to be mine. I am guilty as you are of outraging the sensibilities of a man who deserves at least the consideration of a gentlewoman. I shall learn the truth about these reports, and if they are as false in substance as I believe, I shall make up for my incivilities."

Mrs. Stansbury felt that here was a resistance no less formidable than sudden. It must be crushed, of course, but the present moment was not propitious. She laughed gently.

"I confess I cannot understand you, dear," she said. "What consideration is due a gentleman who is rendered speechless by the accusation of a newspaper? What depth is there to his feeling for your welfare when he rushes away blindly and remains throughout the day, while you are here at the foot of a bursting volcano, as he pointed out. You will find that I am right, Lara. Mr. Constable is not even

a worthy accomplice to the talented Stembridge. He is without speech or valor. What remains when a man is neither brain nor brute?" Her voice had not been raised, and Mrs. Stansbury left the library before Lara formed an answer.

The torturing hours crawled by. The gray afternoon turned to dusk, and the dusk to night. The north was reddened by Pelée's fire-lit cone, which the thick vapor dimmed and blurred. The rumblings were constant. Lara was suffered to fight out her battle alone. She asked no more than this. A thousand times she paced across her room; scores of visits she made to Constable's window, straining her eyes northward, along the road through the day and darkness, to the end of all things—the mountain! Uncle Joey came to plead with her, but she begged him to go away. Her brain was a livid track of flying, futile agonies. In the evening the intermittent rumblings gave way to a growling, constant and incessant. It was as if a steady stream of heavy vehicles was pounding over a wooden bridge. There was a pang in each phase of the monster, since the man had gone up into that red roar. It was nearly midnight when the girl in the upper room heard a step upon the veranda.

"Uncle Joey," she called at the planter's door, "make haste; there is somebody below!"

The moments of waiting assailed the very roots of her reason. The voice that she heard at last was Breen's.

"I beg that you 'll forgive me, Mr. Wall, for arousing you at this hour, but it is necessary for me to have a few words with Miss Stansbury."

"Sir," the planter replied, "anything which concerns yourself is of no moment to Miss Stansbury. If your message is from Mr. Constable, you may tell him to come himself or send a native."

"I dislike to appear insistent, Mr. Wall," Breen replied, without irritation, "but I cannot count my errand accomplished until I have heard from Miss Stansbury. If she should refuse to see me——"

"I am coming down, Mr. Breen," Lara called over the baluster. "Uncle Joey, show Mr. Breen a seat. I 'll be there in a moment."

She turned to reënter her room for a garment. Her mother's figure barred the open doorway.

X.

Constable had been physically unhurt in his thirty years, and the exertions of the past four days had worn little more than the polish from his vitality. Instead of relaxing in the crisis of the newspaper revelation, his body righted under the whip of pride, and he strode down into the city as one who has slipped a burden. He had been beaten in a battle with a woman. Blücher had come to Mrs. Stansbury's aid at

the last moment, in the shape of newspapers from the north. From Lara, however, and not the mother, had come the most crippling blow of all. It was Lara who had handed him the newspaper. She did not wait, nor ask. Around this item, Constable built a gloom-structure of baronial proportions.

His attitude toward Breen was very simple. He would not betray his guest for all the newspapers and police in Christendom. Having waived Breen's offer to detail the particulars of his past, during the first night of acquaintance, Constable certainly could not reproach the other for misrepresenting himself.

It was ten-thirty in the morning when he sent a message out to Captain Negley, countermanding sailing orders, and enclosing a cheerful note to Crusoe, containing a draft for the stipulated amount. At the bank he also left a second sum for Father Damien, and procured considerable current paper for his own uses. His mind moved in a light, irresponsible fashion. It was as if he were obsessed at quick intervals, one after another, by mad kings who dared anything, and whom no one dared refuse. His brain kept the great sorrow in the background, and occupied itself with striking artifices. While aware that in losing Miss Stansbury and the privilege of protecting her, the meaning and direction of his life was gone, still Constable did not yet sense the fullness of the visitation. His was not a wound to heal by first intention; and in bad hurts pain assumes command leisurely and in order.

He plunged into a crowd in the market-place, and began to talk to the natives whimsically, but to the purpose of starting them toward Fort de France, adding that Father Damien would care for them generously there. "I do not say that this is the last day of Saint Pierre," he exclaimed in French, "but I declare to you that if ever a planet looked as if she were about to spring a leak, Mother Earth has the symptoms localized in Pelée!"

Constable's eyes had fixed upon a carriage passing along the edge of the crowd. Now he moved toward it quickly and seized the bridle. Despite the protestations of the driver, he led the vehicle into the good view of all. His face was red with the heat and ashine with laughter and perspiration. Alarm and merriment mingled in the native throng. All eyes followed the towering figure of the American, now bowed before the swinging door of the carriage—and M. Mondet.

"This, dear friends," Constable resumed, as one would produce a rabbit from a silk hat—"this, you all perceive, is your little editor of *Les Colonies.* Is he not bright and clean and pretty? He is very fond of American humor. See how the little editor laughs!"

The Frenchman was really afraid. His smile was yellowish-gray and of sickly contour. His article relative to the American appealed

to him now, entirely stripped of the humor with which it was fraught yesterday, as he composed it in the inner of inner offices. This demon of crackling French and restless hands would stop at nothing. M. Mondet pictured himself being picked up for dead presently. As the blow did not fall instantaneously, he amended the picture with the sorry thought that he was to be played with before being despatched.

"This is the little man who tells you that Saint Pierre is in no danger—who scoffs at those who have already gone," Constable informed his hearers, now holding up the Frenchman's arm, as a referee upraises the whip of a winning fighter. "He says there is no more peril from Pelée than from an old man shaking ashes out of his pipe. Yesterday I proposed to wager my ship against M. Mondet's rolled-top desk that he was wrong, but there was a difficulty in the way. Do you not see, dear friends, that if I won the wager I should not be able to distinguish between M. Mondet's rolled-top desk and M. Mondet's cigarette-case in the ruins of Saint Pierre? You would not think that such a small white person could contain so much poison. I am about to commit many depredations——"

There had been a steady growling from the mountain.

"Ah!" Constable suddenly exclaimed, "Pelée speaks again! 'I will repay! Verily, I will repay!' saith the monster. Let it be so, then, friends of mine. I turn over my little account to the big fire-eater yonder, who will collect all debts. I tell you that we who tarry too long will be buying political extras and last editions in hell from this bit of a newspaper man! . . . Ugh, you maggot—get in there!"

Constable's irritation against the entire tribe of editorial opinion-breeders must have found an instant vent at the last. M. Mondet was chucked like a large soft bundle into the seat of his carriage and the door slammed forcibly, corking the vials of his wrath. In any of the red-blooded zones, a stranger who performed such antics at the expense of a portly and respected citizen would have encountered a quietus quick and blasting, but the people of Martinique are not swift to anger nor forward at reprisals.

"Come!" Constable yelled, in a voice which jerked up his hearers. "Who has use for my offer? Who goes to Fort de France?"

A few came forward, perhaps a dozen in all, out of the fifty or sixty who had listened. Half in anger, half in admiration, which he did not seek to understand, he ran his eye a last time over the dusty, haggard, stifled crowd which he had failed to move.

"Oh, ye of mighty faith!" he roared.

From their eyes, sullen, startled, and pitiful, he glanced beyond to the place where old Vulcan lay, muttering his agonies. The sight completed the circuit of rending voltage, made him think of Lara. With furious zeal he grappled the work at hand, forced his way out

of the crowd, crossed the Roxelane, and hurried toward the *Hôtel des Palms.* His physical energy was imperious, but the numbness of his scalp was a pregnant warning against the perils of heat. The city was silent enough to act like a vast sounding-board. Voices reached him from far behind, from the harbor-front to the left, from shut shops and houses everywhere. At the hotel, after much difficulty, he procured guides and a small outfit for the journey to the summit of the mountain. It was after mid-day when the party rode into *Morne Rouge.* The ash-hung valley was behind, and Constable drank deeply of the clean east wind from the Atlantic. There was a rush of bitterness, too, because Lara was not sharing the priceless volumes of sun-lit vitality. All the impetus of his mad enterprise was needed now to turn the point of bereavement, and force it into the background again. The party pushed through Ajoupa Boullion to the gorge of the Falaise, the northward bank of which marked the chosen trail to the summit.

And now they moved upward in the midst of the old glory of Martinique. The brisk Trades blowing evenly in the heights wiped the eastern slope of the mountain clear of stone-dust and whipped the blasts of sulphur down into the valley toward the shore. Green lakes of cane filled the valleys behind, and groves of cocoa-palms, so distant and so orderly that they looked like a city garden set with hen and chickens.

Northward, through the rifts, glistened the sea, steel-blue and cool. Before them arose the huge, green-clad mass of the mountain, its corona dim with smoke and lashed by storm. Down in the southwest lay the ghastly pall, the hidden, tortured city, tranced under the cobra-head of the monster and already laved in its poison.

The trail became very steep at two thousand feet, and this fact, together with the back-thresh of the summit disturbance, forced Constable to abandon the animals. It transpired that four of the seven natives felt it their duty, at this point, to stay behind with the mules. A little later, when the growling from the prone upturned face of the great beast suddenly arose to a roar that twisted the flesh and outraged the senses of man, the American looked back and found that only one native was faltering behind, instead of three.

Fascination for the dying Thing took hold of him now, and drew him on. Constable was conscious of no fear for his life, but of a fixed terror lest he should prove physically unable to go on to the end. He found himself tearing up a handkerchief and stuffing the shreds in his ears, to deaden the horrid vibrations. With the linen remaining, he filled his mouth, shutting his jaws together upon it, as the wheels of a wagon are blocked on an incline.

The titanic disorder placated his own. He revelled in it, unconscious of passing time. He did not realize that he was alone, but

knew well from the contour of the slope, learned intimately in past visits, that he was nearing the *Lac des Palmists,* which marked the summit level. Yet changes, violent changes, were everywhere evidenced. The shoulder of the mountain was smeared with a crust of ash and seamed with fresh scars. The crust was made by the dry whirling winds playing upon the paste formed of stone-dust and condensed steam. The clicking whir, like the clap of wings, heard at intervals, accounted for the scars. Bombs of rock were being hurled from the great tubes.

That he was in the range of a raking volcano fire did not impress this ant clinging to the beard of a giant. Up, knees and hands, he crawled—up over the throbbing chin, to the black pounded lip of the monster. Out of the old lake coiled the furious tower of steam and rock-dust which mushroomed in high heaven, like the primal nebulæ from which the worlds were made. Pockets of gas exploded in the heights, rending the periphery as the veil of the temple was rent. Only this to see, but sounds not meant for the ears of man, sounds which seemed to saw his skull in twain—the thundering engines of the planet.

The rocky rim of the lake was hot to his hands and knees, but he could not go back. A thought in his brain held him there with thrilling bands—the same thought which Hayden Breen evolved as he stood at the edge of the Brooklyn pier. . . . But it was only a plaything of mind—the vagary of altitude and immensity. "Did ever a man clog a live volcano? Did ever suicidal genius conceive of corrupting such majesty of force with his pygmy purpose?" . . . The irreverend query righted the balances.

There he lay, sprawled at the edge of the universal mystery, at the secret entrance to the chamber of earth's dynamos. The edge of the pit shook with the frightful work going on below, yet he was not slain. The torrent burst past and upward, clean as a missing bullet. The bombs of rock canted out from sheer weight and fell behind him. That which he comprehended—although his eyes saw only the gray thundering cataclysm—was never before imaged in the mind of man.

The gray blackened. The roar dwindled, and his senses reeled. With a rush of saliva the linen dropped from his open mouth. Constable was sure that there was a gaping cleft in his skull, for he could feel the air blowing in and out, cold and colder. He tried to lift his hands to cover the sensitive wound, but they groped in vain for his head. With the icy draughts of air, he seemed to hear, faintly, his name falling upon the bared ganglion.

"Peter! Peter Constable!"

He strained his face toward the sound. The lower part of his body would not move. He was uncoupled, like a beast whose spine is broken.

"Peter! Oh, Peter Constable!" he heard again.

He thought it was the Reaper calling forth his ghost. He wished it were the woman who called.

XI.

When Constable opened his eyes he was far down the slope, and Breen was bending over him.

"Hello!" said he. "What unhorsed me?"

"The sight of hell, Peter. At least, I can't find wound upon you."

"Queer about that. I had just settled down comfortably to view that spout when—pluff! I began to lose track o' things and my head broke. What was it—gas, altitude——?"

"More likely old Pelée was up to something he preferred you should n't see," said Breen. "I know the racket turned me sick as a poisoned rat while I was dragging at your leg. I know that the natives would n't venture within two hundred yards; also, that you are a mortal heavy young person."

"And so you retrieved the fallen under the guns of the enemy? That was devilishly good of you, Breen. It was, indeed."

The natives were pressing in. Darkness was beginning. Breen was conscious of a catch in his throat. He drew a flask of brandy, uncorked it, and held it toward Constable.

"Peter," he said quietly, "I ran from you this morning."

"You did n't run from me this afternoon, the which is lucky for me. Take a little touch yourself, old playmate, and don't get moody. One needs a pal when one makes such a mussy dumping-ground of good chances. The engaging Mr. Stembridge never did me any harm, and all that the newspapers could accomplish in the minds of people at large would move me to no deeper emotion than to say, 'Dear folks be—hanged!'"

"Living God, Peter! if I had n't been here, you would be a good daylight run out on the decent ocean by this time, with the lady!"

"Please don't goad yourself further, Breen. That matter is mine—all mine." Constable spoke in a low voice. Breen was bending over him in the dusk. "You did n't force yourself upon me. You did n't even come along by chance. I asked you to cruise with me. You volunteered to tell me about yourself. I said it was n't necessary. 'This man has a mind, and he is n't a coward,' was the conclusion I came to that night, and I have n't seen fit to change my opinion."

"But the lady——"

"Yes, the lady has spoken. I am done—down and out. . . . The point is, you did n't turn on Pelée's throttle. You 're not to blame because I 'm a dub of a lover. Let 's take one more sniff at the star-juice—the three-star juice—and I 'll get up. I 'm not on sick report."

"You 're a game devil, Peter," said Breen as he helped the other into the saddle.

"Not game enough to abduct one frightened little mother-handled girl," Constable replied.

They were riding together down the winding trail, apart from the guides. The lights of Ajoupa Boullion were ahead, and the mountain carried on a frightful drumming behind. The coiling masses of volcanic spume, miles above the craters, generated its own fire, and, lit in the flashes, looked like billows of boiling steel. Constable was very weak, and Breen rode upon sheer nerve—nerve that men had often wondered at.

"Peter," he said at length, "you are not through trying to get the lady out of this?"

"To think that such a tone and such a question could come from the 'implacable Stembridge'!" Constable said, with a laugh.

"The 'implacable Stembridge' was never crucified before," Breen answered. "To you and me, together, it does not vastly matter that I am Stembridge, one of the bigger wolves. But others have come in. Because I am here, you stand dazed to-night, your heart torn out. Because I was here, you went up to the mouth of that horrible pit to-day, and lay down to die. I have played with men and women, Peter, but I never wrecked a white man before, or broke the heart of a friend."

A hand stretched across the dark and fell upon Breen's arm and tightened there. "I know how you feel; but what would you have me do?" Constable muttered.

"When I see a wisp of smoke on the horizon, and know that you and the lady and the *Madame* are wrapped in it——"

"For four days I have been dreaming that dream, Breen."

"It must come true this night."

"Nothing short of a second vicarious atonement could accomplish it, I'm afraid," Constable declared.

"But words, Peter, words mean things to a woman! There will have been a reaction. Go there to-night. Speak to her alone. Tell her how you came to know me—how men look at these things—that the newspaper story was as new to you as to herself. Tell her of your trip to Pelée, and how the disorder they see and hear down in the city looks up there at first hand!"

It was at this instant that a full-rigged thought sprang into Breen's brain, which had known but the passing of hopeless derelicts throughout the day. He dared not trust the thought to words, lest the other should cancel it, but he called to the guides to increase the pace.

"Ah, she would not listen to words of mine," Constable answered hopelessly. "If she had any faith in me, words would not be necessary. A man knows when he is beaten. I have drawn my little quietus for one day. To-morrow——"

"There may not be any to-morrow for Saint Pierre."

"Of course. For that matter, we might be boiled out like a pair of tater-bugs before we can pick up a snack in Ajoupa Boullion. Then, again, the people may be right, and I a frenzied alarmist. Pelée is throwing off pressure true and steady as a clock running down. It may be that he 'll relieve his crowded chambers this way."

Such words, more than anything that had passed, revealed the extent of Constable's reaction. They were entering Ajoupa Boullion, where food and fresh mounts were procurable.

"It 's probably better for her that she did not give herself to me, one of the Great Unbranded," Constable observed, when they were in the saddle again. His mind was deepening the bitter groove now. "We 'll put all this behind us presently, Breen. We 're mates, I guess. Maybe if we touch all the isles of the world, and leave a pound of flesh in each, as we have here, we 'll be pure, undefiled spirit at the last port."

"This is our last ride together, Peter. There are many reasons. One is—the law is on my trail! . . . Will you please inform me what you are laughing at?"

Constable carefully related the Crusoe episode.

Breen groaned. "Don't you see, Peter, you are winding yourself up tighter and tighter in my crimes?"

"Somehow, I can't get wrought up over trifles to-night. The detective matter disposed of, what are the other reasons why you and I must diverge after this night?"

Breen was silent a moment. "I was pretty hard-hit this morning," he said finally. "The rough weather broke down my idea about not going to the wine-shop again. It seems incredible, but Soronia has never had a lover—before. I found her—if you 'll forgive me—in need of me. You see, I had just come from the reeking stone of sacrifice where you lay; and I relit a pair of creole eyes—promised to go to sea no more."

"Suppose I had missed Crusoe?" Constable asked bitterly. "Suppose I had been a poor liar?"

"There are many Crusoes, Peter. They won't all fail. You can't keep this one off always. It amounts to just this for me—that I have found my little isle in the midst of the sea, like that other promoter who all but conquered Europe."

"But why could you not both go aboard with me?" the other persisted.

"I have told you that after this ride I cease to vampirize the career of Constable. If Crusoe finds the Rue de Rivoli, very well. If not, for the present, very well again. None of his ilk shall find you and me together. Two or three times, back across the forbidden tundras of years, I have met men who stack up something as you do in my thoughts

to-night. I never hurt any of those fellows as I have hurt you. I 'm too fond of you to hit you any harder. Let 's talk about something else."

Constable had received a singular appeal. He knew that if there were any future for him, he would think of Breen's last words coördinate in memory with the quaking rim of the crater. It did not occur to him to answer at once. They were passing through *Morne Rouge,* so overcrowded now that people were sleeping in the streets. On the dark down-trail again, words did not come to him, and when the party reëntered the bank of falling ash and the sulphur stench, it was not good to open one's mouth in speech.

The guides were paid at the edge of the city. Saint Pierre was dark and harrowingly still. The hoof-beats of the two mules which the Americans retained were muffled in the ash, as if they were pounding along the sandy beach. Often the rousing fetor of death reached the nostrils of the riders, above the drying, cutting vapor of the volcano, and their beasts shied and snorted at the untoward humps on the highway. It was as if war and pestilence had stalked through Saint Pierre that day, and a winter storm had tried to cover the dreadful aftermath. A door opened at last before them, and there was a cry from Soronia. Père Rabeaut hurried out and led the mules to shelter.

Constable sank into his old seat at the round table under the window. He watched Breen and the woman. His friend was huge and lean in the lamp-light; his white clothing stained from the saddle, his hair and mustache white from ash, his black eyes burning in a face haggard unto ghastliness. The woman was in his arms as they stood together. What they said, Constable did not allow his mind to reason with, but the glory of her lover's presence which shone in the eyes of Soronia called down upon the watcher his own black vistas of desolation. She had found, for an hour, the true and the beautiful—the soul anchorage which he was never to know! . . . He would keep all craft of the Crusoe stamp from blundering into her sweet haven—this much he could do, was his thought. Wine and food were placed before him, and he ate a little, for the sake of the wine. His eyes pained from the lamp-light, and he dropped his face forward into his arms on the table. Close to the wood, the vibrations of the mountain boomed louder in his ears.

"But you must not go away again!" Soronia implored.

"Yes, for an hour—two hours at the most—little fairy," Breen whispered.

They were in the living-rooms across the court, where the bird-cages were tiered and covered with cloths. She clung to him pitifully.

"With you away—oh, my lover, no, no! . . . I cannot live again for hours and hours!"

"Hush!—he is in great trouble. He must not awake until after I am gone. Then he must not know where I have gone. I am going to the plantation-house on the *Morne d'Orange*. It is for him. Two hours at the most, and the last—the last I shall ever leave you, little fairy!"

Breen recrossed the court and entered the wine-shop on tiptoe. Constable did not move; his breathing was inaudible. At the street door Soronia joined him like a shadow. He kissed her and put her arms from him. It was eleven-fifteen by the old French clock above the wine-casks.

Soronia, alone, stared for an instant at the figure sprawled across the table—the man who had caused her lover twice to be torn from her arms that day. Silently she stepped to him, refilled his wine-glass, and placed it, with the bottle, a little distance from his hand, so that he would not overturn them in his sleep. Then she moved to a chair, in the shadows at the far end of the shop, and sat down rigidly to wait.

XII.

In the dim upper hallway, Lara read in the face of her mother, hard and white as ivory, that the clash of wills had come. A slender arm barred the door through which the daughter had to pass.

"Lara, what do you mean to do?"

"I mean to hear what this man has to say."

"At midnight—listen to an outlaw?"

"Yes; let me pass!"

The elder woman did not move her arm. Slowly, softly, she said: "I say that you shall not! Order Uncle Joey to send the thief away, or you and I—are estranged."

Lara faltered before the revolting possibilities of the moment. "Mother," she implored, "don't poison the years! I am a grown woman—I see my way clearly!"

She leaned against the arm that crossed the doorway. It did not give. The face close to hers in the feeble light burned away her self-control. The rigidity of the bar suffocated—as if it had pressed against her throat. Every fibre of her young body sprang tense to burst the insufferable bond. Not a tissue relaxed, although the bar was forced. Her mother's fingers scraped like wood across the casing. The sickening sound made an imperishable record in the girl's brain. Horrified at the thing she had done, Lara would have fallen at her mother's feet, praying forgiveness, had there reached her now a murmur of pain or relenting. But the face was not changed. The sovereign will would not have broken had she hewn her way into the room with a sword. Low-spoken, freezing utterances found the brain of the girl, promptings of the dread, imperfect faculty:

"Go, grown woman, who sees her way clearly! Go with the thief to your lover—the male who dares not come to you. Go, ripe girl, to the terrace of the bagnios and wine-rooms—he will be waiting for you there! Go out to the hunted ship, then—with the thief and his dull tool!"

Lara seized her hat and shawl and darted past the pitiless voice, shutting her ears with her hands. Down the stairway she sped, her one thought to flee. There was truce below; the awfulness of defeat behind. . . . The men had heard nothing. Breen stood by the door, his face whitened with dust. The planter waited near the foot of the stairs—another obstacle.

"Go to mother quickly—she needs you!"

"Where are you going, Lara?" the old man gasped.

"To the ship with the other refugees!"

"Not with this man, child——"

"He is Mr. Constable's friend."

"But I'll go with you, dear! I'll have a carriage brought——"

"In the name of pity, Uncle Joey—don't leave mother alone longer—up there!" she said desperately. "I am going out to the ship. Your nephew has asked me to be—his wife. This man will take me to him. For God's sake, go to mother!"

The planter turned a last look at Breen and obeyed, his face a field of conflict. Lara threw the shawl about her shoulders and hurried to the door, which Breen opened in utmost amazement. She turned to him in the dark, with the burning question:

"Is Peter Constable dead?"

"No——"

"Is he hurt—lying on the ship?"

"No, he is reasonably well, and in Saint Pierre."

Reacting weakness rushed over her now, the doubts of an untried soul, and the loneliness of an outcast. Like the deadly sin of blasphemy, the scene in the upper hallway was upreared in her brain. She had been borne throughout the day, unerringly by the processes of mind, toward the expression of her own will; but the fruition was so sudden and horrible as forever to be beyond the shadow and circumstance of extenuation.

If Constable were well and in Saint Pierre, why did *he* not come to her, instead of sending this man? Even though Breen were all a man could be, had Constable the right to send him to her, after the allegations of the press? Could there be any truth in the damning suggestions of her mother? Might there not exist in the Constable character a war of the base and noble?

These big tangible terrors possessed her. She could not go back—the bridges were burned. The man at her side did not speak, save to

answer her questions. Ahead were possibilities and fancies, beside which the rumbling menaces of the mountain were clean fears. She halted. Her body swayed a little, and the man put out his hand to steady her. A cry escaped her lips.

"I cannot go on!" she exclaimed brokenly. "I have done a terrible wrong in coming. Everything is different. Leave me. I—I shall go back toward Fort de France!"

Breen was dazed by the altered mood of the woman. Until the present instant of their walk, he had been contemplating a serene end to a day of most brutal beginnings. They were on the eminence of the *Morne d' Orange.* Pelée was a baleful changing jewel in the black north. Breen heard the woman's breathing. He had no pity for her. He had spoken with exceeding gentleness, but it was forced. In the same voice he continued, since she did not speak:

"You could not walk to Fort de France, and there is neither boat nor carriage to-night. I thought you were going to let him be happy again."

"Did he send you to me?"

"He does not know that I am here, Miss Stansbury," Breen replied. "As we rode in from the mountain, I begged him to come to you to-night, but he said that if there were any hope of his saving your life, you would have shown him some sign this morning, instead——"

She felt herself called to her own defense. "Could he not see that the newspapers brought a shock to me?" she questioned pitifully.

"The shock was just as great, and the matter contained in the newspapers—just as new, to him," he said. "Do you suppose he would have introduced me to you if he had understood all about me? I am all to blame, not our good Peter. Because I brought all this trouble upon him, I came to-night to undo the tragedy of your being away from him, and yet so close to the volcano."

"And you went with him to the crater to-day?"

"Do you think I would let him kill himself?"

"Oh, no!—but you said—you spoke about riding back with him from the crater," she returned hastily. The man's unyielding position wrought upon her strangely, sometimes startled, sometimes steadied, her.

"I heard that he had gone up the mountain, and followed. I found him at the summit in a faint, lying at the very rim of disaster."

"You—saved him from death?"

"A very essential proceeding, since I sent him there."

"Oh, what do you mean?"

"It was my presence that prevented you both from being out at sea to-night. . . . It was a very little thing to bring him back from the crater, Miss Stansbury, but a big accomplishment to make him glad that I brought him back."

"Did he intend to kill himself by going there? Do you mean that I—I——?"

Breen felt that she deserved vividly to apprehend her failures of performance. "No, Miss Stansbury, but he was dazed with punishment. That a doubt could exist in your mind, regarding his integrity, pulled him out of his orbit, so to speak."

"But it was all so intricate and mysterious," she pleaded. "I did n't mean to do wrong, but you must see that a woman who can only wait, and never be told things—may not know what is best!"

His heart kindled to her now, but he was not building for the moment. "Let me tell you about Peter Constable," he said gently. "I was hunted to a corner in New York. I am all that the papers say, and much beside which they have overlooked. Only, I have never robbed the poor, nor widows and orphans, and I never have betrayed a friend until to-day, when my history arose in its wrath and manhandled poor Peter. All my operations were over when he found me—all my farces and strategies. I had lost my wool-cap, and the lambs would no longer play with me. They drove me to the water-front. I was at the edge of the end when Peter Constable called. . . . Come, Miss Stansbury, let us walk on toward the launch."

Breen had judged well the instant to make this suggestion. Though afraid that she would turn back, he spoke briskly, lightly, as if she had merely paused to survey the night. She obeyed, and, as he talked on, their steps grew faster and faster down the *morne* toward the edge of the silent, stricken city. Breen related how his friend had put aside for her the century-rare opportunity of studying Pelée in the throes. Of the volcano itself, he spoke familiarly, trenchantly, as only one could do who had peered into the roaring sink of chaos that day. He pictured at last the man with whom he had ridden, their last ride together, the gameness which men love, and—in tints almost ethereal—the brooding romance.

She was thrilled by this stranger who had played with men and lived to pray for one. By his own word, world-weary and a skeptic of human character, he had discovered his Utopia in a friend. Because she burned to believe all Breen said, his words rang true. Higher in her heart than he had reached in any of the day's fluctuations, Constable was upraised now and held. She did not call it love—she did not call it anything; but it was a valiant presence to cling to, as she entered with this stranger, hunted of men, the smothered lane which Rue Victor Hugo had become.

"You are a prince of defenders," she whispered.

"A man less white would not need a friend to champion his cause," he replied.

"Where is Peter Constable now?"

"I will put you in the care of Ernst in the launch, and then bring him to you," he said.

"Where is Mr. Constable?" she demanded imperiously.

"In a little wine-shop up in the Rue de Rivoli."

She did not fail in this last pitiless assault, though the dreadful final sentences of her mother came back. This night was set apart in her life for the learning of the truth.

"I shall *not* wait at the launch. I shall go to him—there—*up in the terrace.* Why not?"

"It is the far better way," Breen answered steadily. "I only thought to save you from the climb."

The horrid insinuations could find no hold in her brain. They hovered afar off, like navies crippled in the roadstead. Breen's ready answer was a sterling defense.

"Let us hurry," she panted.

They turned and faced the empty cliff. To the left, was an opened door, and the form of a woman was carved in the light. The woman in the doorway spoke words warmed and vitalized from her very heart, and Breen answered and took her in his arms. Lara brushed past the two and into the wine-shop.

The huge figure hunched forward upon the table had not moved. The bottle and wine-glass were as Soronia had left them. Lara stepped forward and touched his shoulder. He stirred uneasily, muttered as if in pain, but did not lift his head. She pressed her hand more heavily upon his soiled coat.

"Yes, yes—what is it?" he said in a quick, frightened way.

The haggard face turned up to her. The jaw dropped a little. His eyes, though fixed upon her own, seemed to have lost their direction. He gained his feet slowly, clutching the table with his hands.

"I have come to go with you—to your ship!" she declared brokenly.

"Breen, come here to me," he called, brushing his face roughly with his hand.

"It's not a dream, Peter," Breen answered cheerfully. "I found her waiting for you at the plantation-house."

"No. It is I—Lara!"

He put his hand forth to touch her. She caught it in her own.

"God love you, Lady!" he said at length.

Père Rabeaut entered the rear door.

"And now," Breen was saying, "you two must not forget that Pelée is still alive, and that my part is still undone while you are here—even though together." He spoke in English, which neither Soronia nor her father understood.

"But are *you* not going?" Lara asked.

"Oh, no, Miss Stansbury. Peter understands. I have told him

that Nicholas Stembridge ceases to compromise him after this night. It really is the better, the *only* way."

He turned to Père Rabeaut and added lightly in French: "Our guests are going. Let us all share a last sunrise of Épernay."

"But you know that I do not feel as the others do, but—as your friend does. Really, I am not afraid of you," she said unsteadily. There were tears in her eyes.

"It is a beautiful ending," Breen answered.

"I want you to know that I shall always remember your coming—your words when I would have failed!" she finished.

The promoter of revolutions made an inaudible answer, but, seeing Père Rabeaut proffering the wine in his inimitable way, Breen proposed a toast with much joy:

"To the open sea—and memories!"

There was a moment in which Breen and Constable stood close together. Lara and Soronia were whispering, and strange it was, but out of their whispers was evolved a kiss.

"Look, Peter—the lily and the tiger lily bend together," said Breen.

The door was shut behind them. They faced the harbor and started down the sloping way.

"God love you, Lady," Constable said again.

"But you——?" she whispered.

XIII.

Constable's mind was slow to inform this great concept. The day had left behind in his brain a crowd of unassimilated acts, and into this dull, formless company swept the climacteric joy. Figuratively speaking, he had to grope about until lantern and matches were brought together, before he could adjust and measure and proportion. He halted at last in the empty street, seized the girl by her shoulders, saying, as one would evoke the heart out of a miracle:

"Lara Stansbury! Lara Stansbury!"

"Yes, Sir Peter!"

"Don't laugh at me; don't grow impatient for I must ask questions."

"Begin. I shall be very good."

"Are you the little girl who handed me a newspaper this morning?"

"I am that little girl grown-up, sir."

She revelled in the joy she was giving him, and thrilled under the tightening pressure of his hands upon her shoulders.

"And when you grew up—you came to me?"

"Please, sir, you said you would take me sailing."

"Lara, as I looked down the fiery throat of that dragon to-day, everything grew black and still like a vacuum. I thought it was death

then. Tell me, did I come back, or are we 'two hurrying shapes in twilight land—in no man's land'?"

"I'm sure you must have come back, sir, because I didn't die to-day, and we can't be talking together on different planes—with your fingers impaling my shoulders!"

"Lara Stansbury—are you mine?"

The huge fellow was lost in his labyrinth of happiness. The doubts that had smothered her answer were lifted now, and he heard his victory without a breath of its expression hampered. The wine-shop had vindicated her daring. With all the eagerness of brimming womanhood, which bursts the bonds of repression for the first time, she gave him her heart of hearts. She was like a queen who summons a man of the people into her inner sanctuary and bids him rule herself and her kingdom. Resistless, trembling, whispering, she was drawn into his arms.

"To think I didn't know you when you first came!" she was saying faintly. "But when I was a little girl I knew you—used to be frightened because you were so big! . . . Always then I knew you would come some time to take me away for your lady, and I thought I would cry when you came, because I would be so happy. That part didn't come true, did it, Strongheart? . . . They were all dreams, baby dreams, as if left over from some other betrothal with you! And when I grew into a big girl, Sir Peter, I was ashamed, and put them away, with other baby thoughts and things! . . . Ah, listen to old Pelée!"

The volcano had lost his monstrous rhythm and was ripping forth irregular crashes. Rue Victor Hugo was alive with voices, aroused by the hideous rattling in the throat of the mountain. The old dread fell again upon Constable. He drew the girl forward, almost running. "I beg of you—don't look back!" he muttered. "The launch is just ahead."

"Hello, Ernst! I have kept you waiting long," he called as they neared the end of the pier. "Top speed to the *Madame!*"

The bells of Saint Pierre rang the hour of two. The launch was speeding across the smoky harbor, riding down little isles of flotsam. dead birds from the sky, and nameless mysteries from the roiled bed of the harbor. The wind was hot in their faces, like a stoke-hold blast. Often he heard a hissing in the water, like the sound of a wet finger touching hot iron. A burning cinder fell upon his hand, a messenger from Pelée, and cleared the source of the sounds. He jerked off his coat and tossed it about her shoulders, which the filmy shawl and the delicate fabric of her waist scarcely protected.

"But you——" she protested.

"I could not feel fire to-night!"

Her face in the lantern-ray enchanted him. In mingled shyness and ecstasy, he took it between his hands. He could not speak for the marvel of the thing—that this, so vibrant, so beautiful, was for him to kiss and worship and keep bright. Her cheeks were as soft as a flower, her eyes glowing with the ardor which the tropics alone can inspire in flower and woman. In the strange light, he gazed with the raptness of one who seeks to penetrate the mystery of being—as if it were any clearer in a woman's eyes than in a Nile night, a Venetian song, or in the flow of gasoline to the spark, which filled the contemplation of Ernst.

"Beloved," he whispered at last, "I will tell you how much I love you at our golden wedding."

He heard the swift intaking of her breath with the peculiar tremble which follows tears. The launch was swinging around to the *Madame's* ladder. Wherever the ship lights fell, the sheeting of ash could be seen —upon mast and railing and plates.

"Are you frightened, dearest?" he whispered.

"You will not go back to Saint Pierre!"

"We need not think of that now. We are going together first—out into deep water and ocean air!" He was helping her up the ladder. When they reached the main-deck, he called to Captain Negley on the bridge: "Pull us out of this blizzard, captain—a dozen miles if necessary, and quick as you can."

They had scarcely reached the bridge before the anchor-chain began to grind. Three minutes later the *Madame's* screws were kicking the ugly harbor tide. They watched, until only the dull red of Pelée pierced the thick veil behind; until a star, and another, pricked the blue vault ahead, and the air blew in fragrant as wine from the rolling Caribbean.

"God! how sweet life is to me!" Constable said softly. "Grand old Pelée—he has been true blue! He has made me his heir, and waited for me to carry his fairest daughter out into these reviving winds. Blow, old Vulcan, now! 'Splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair!' And you, gorgeous girl, have you any charity for a man who grows incoherent from sheer joy?"

"Yes, even though he forgets the city," she answered.

Captain Negley approached them. "We 're about a dozen miles out now, sir," he said.

"Cruise around until daylight, captain; then draw in until you can find bottom to hitch to, but not any closer than seven or eight miles."

"Very well, sir."

Lara and Constable leaned over the aft railing of the bridge. The main-deck below swarmed with women of Saint Pierre. They could not stay below, now that the defiled harbor was behind. Many were hum-

ming the old French lullabies to their little ones. Good food and cool air had brought back the songs of peace and summer to those lowly hearts.

"Lara, do you think if I went back to your mother now, or, rather, after daylight, I could persuade her to join us?"

"I knew it would come to that," she said, with a shudder. "I have been trying to put it off. Can't you guess that I had a bitter price to pay before following your friend to-night? She will not join us."

"I am going back to try, Lara. I think I can guess something that you passed through before leaving the house."

"Oh, no, you cannot! I could not suffer you to hear the words she uttered. It was like the wrath of Pelée—only causeless and without warning!"

"Still, I must leave nothing undone to-night. I want the years bright for you, and I must try once more. After all, the mother of my beloved can do no wrong."

"People might be safe away up there on the *Morne d'Orange,*" she said fearfully, "but you must pass *to and fro* through the city!"

Gently he turned her face from the hidden city. "Look yonder into the splendid night!" he whispered. "Feel the sting of the spray. Hear the bows sing! It's all for us, Lara, the gilded track to the moon, the loveliest of earth's distances—and the sky afterward! We can't leave this great thing undone. Listen, dearest: when the dawn comes up the *Madame* will be lying seven or eight miles off-shore. I'll take the launch into the harbor, and climb the *morne* once more to the big plantation-house, bringing your love and mine to the mother-bird whom I owe for all things good. If she will not come with me, I shall command Uncle Joey to take her to Fort de France. After that——"

She was clinging to him and sobbing. "After that?" she repeated.

"We steam for Fort de France then," he said, "and Father Damien must spare us an hour from his labors. After that, beloved, you and I and the honeymoon—out on the swinging seas!"

Just now Denny Macready appeared on the bridge.

"Lara, I want you to know this Denny," said Constable. "I found him in a stoke-hold, and have n't been able to get rid of him since. He 's my steward at sea, my butler ashore, and 'Yours solid' anywhere. Denny, I 'm going ashore at dawn——"

"'T is crool t' hear, sorr."

"That point is pretty well covered, Denny. I want you—that is, I 'm leaving Miss Stansbury in your hands."

"Sh-sh—wait till I putt on me gloves."

"How are your charges faring, Denny?" Constable asked.

"Is ut th' little wans, you mane?"

"Yes, the natives."

"If I on'y had some goats, sorr!"

"Why goats?"

"Sure, I 've been potherin' with lime wather an' sea wather an' wather straight an' sugar av milk—whin goats could do ut all, an' betther."

Macready went below, leaving a laugh on the bridge—which was no little thing. The *Madame* crept in to the edge of the smoke. The gray ghost of morning was stealing into the hateful haze. The ship found anchorage. The launch was in readiness below. It was six in the morning. Pugh, the new third officer, was just leaving the bridge. Constable and Lara were standing at the door of his cabin.

"I know that you could do no greater thing than this—for me," she told him; "but when a woman comes into her own—as I have—it is terrible to be left alone so soon. There are warnings in the wind, menaces in the silence, dangers in everything. It cannot be that I have found you, my lover, only to lose you again. Oh, come back to me quickly, dear!"

"Three hours shall see us on our way to Fort de France," he answered blithely. "Trust me to hurry back to you. Pelée is still now. It may be that the pressure is eased——"

"There, kiss me, and don't wait! The very name of Pelée is horrible!" She moved with him to the ladder. "I thought I would be braver than this, *Pierre Valeur!*"

He whispered a last word and descended. Ernst had been relieved, and another sailor was in the launch, one for whom preparations had been made in the dim hall. Constable was happy. He waved a kiss at the pale, mute face leaning overside, and the fog rushed in between.

XIV.

The launch gained the inner harbor, and the white ships at anchor were seen vague as phantoms in the vapor—French steamers, Italian barques, and the smaller West Indian craft—all with their work to do and their way to win. Constable heard one officer shout to another, inquiring if Saint Pierre was in the usual place, or had switched sites with Hades. The day was clearing rapidly, however, and before the launch reached shore the haze was so lifted that Pelée could be seen, floating a pennant of black out to sea. In the city, a large frame warehouse was ablaze. The tinder-dry structure was being destroyed with almost explosive speed.

"Wait for me here," Constable said to the sailor, as the launch scraped the Sugar Landing.

A blistering heat rushed down from the expiring building to the

edge of the land. Crowds watched the destruction. Many of the people were in holiday attire. This was the Day of Ascension, and Saint Pierre would shortly pray and praise at the cathedral. Even now the bells were calling, and there was low laughter from a group of maidens. Was it not good to live, since the sun shone again and the mountain did not answer the sainted bells? It was true that Pelée poured forth a black streamer with lightning in its folds; true that the people trod upon the hot gray dust of the volcano's waste; that the heat was such as no man had ever felt before and many sat in misery upon the ground; true, indeed, that voices of hysteria came from the hovels, and the breath of uncovered death from the by-ways;—but the gala spirit was not dead. The bells were calling; the mountain was still; bright dresses were abroad—for the torrid children of France must laugh.

Constable fell in with the procession on the way to the cathedral. Reaching there, he climbed to a huge block of stone in the square, and hurled broadcast the germ of flight. Many had seen him before, when his face was haggard. He was smiling now. There was color in his skin, fire in his eyes, a ring in his voice. Fear was not in him.

A carriage was not procurable, so he walked toward the *Morne d'Orange.* It was seven-thirty, and the distance was two miles to the plantation-house. At eight, or soon afterward, he would be there—eight on the morning of Ascension Day; at nine, in the launch again, speeding out to the smile of the bride!

Twenty times a minute she recurred to him as he walked. There was no waning nor wearing—save a wearing brighter, perhaps—of the images she had put in his mind. The night had brought him palaces and gardens and treasure-houses; everywhere he turned, new riches broke upon him. That her face had lain between his hands; that his hands had brought that face to his own; that her whispers, kisses, confidences, her prayers and passions and coming years, all found their centre and origin in himself, like bright doves that had a cote within his heart—these thoughts lifted the poor man to such heights of praise and blessedness that he seemed to shatter the dome of human limitations, and emerge crown and shoulders into the illimitable ether.

The road up the *morne* stretched blinding white before him. Panting and spent not a little, he strode upward through the vicious pressure of heat, holding his helmet free from his head, that the air might circulate under the rim. At length, upon the crest of the *morne,* he perceived the gables of the plantation-house, above the palms and mangoes, gold-brown in the dazzling haze.

Pelée roared. Sullen and dreadful out of the silence voiced the monster, roused to his labor afresh. The American began to run, glancing back at the darkening north. . . . The crisis was not passed

in favor of peace. The holiday was darkened. The *Madame* would fill with refugees now, and the road to Fort de France turn black with flight. These were his thoughts as he ran.

The lights of the day burned out one by one. The crust of the earth stretched to a cracking tension. The air was beetling with strange concussions. In the clutch of realization, he turned one shining look toward the sea. Detonations accumulated into the crash of a thousand navies.

On the porch of the plantation-house, twenty yards away, stood the mother of Lara, her eyes fascinated, lost in the north. At the steps he fell, caught her skirt, her waist, in his hands. Across the lawn, through the roaring black, he bore her, brushing her fingers and her fallen hair from his face. He reached the curbing of the old well with his burden, crawled over, and grasped the rusty chain. Incandescent tongues lapped the cistern's raised coping, and running streams of red dust filtered down.

It was eight in the morning of Ascension Day. *La Montagne Pelée* was giving birth to Death.

XV.

When the launch entered the denser cloud and faded from her sight, Miss Stansbury retired to the cabin. Over all her thoughts of the unhallowed parting from her mother the night before, and the clean, valorous act of her lover now, hung the defined terror lest Pelée should intervene. She heard Macready's step at the door; the calm voice of an officer on the bridge; the morning bells.

The pale winding-sheet was unwrapped from the beauty of morning. Through a port-hole, she saw the rose and gold on the far, dim hills. Her eyes smarted from weariness, but her mind, like an automatic thing, swept around the great circle—from the ship to the city, to the house beyond the *morne* and back again. She saw him in the launch, in the midst of native-groups on the shore, in the plantation house, begging her mother to listen, importuning Uncle Joey to take her to Fort de France, returning through the streets with people following,—the crowded launch, and then the joy of empty arms filled. But sometimes Pelée would burst into the deepening channel of thoughts, effacing the whole, and leaving her, a shrieking, dishevelled creature, in the midst of a chaos which would not answer. She went on deck. Laird, the first officer, invited her to ascend to the bridge. He was scrutinizing through the glass a blotch of smoke on the city-front. "What do you make of it, Miss Stansbury?" he asked.

The lenses brought to her a nucleus of red in the black bank. The rest of Saint Pierre was a gray doll settlement, set in the shelter of little gray hills. She could see the riven and castellated crest of Pelée, weaving his black ribbon. It was all small, silent, and unearthly.

"What 's this you 're talkin'? 'T is no bit av a geyser in a dirt-pile as can tell him how t' come an' go."

The screaming of the native women reached them from the hold. Macready opened the door, and a blast of terrible heat entered the cabin. The woman was clutching the arms of the chair and staring at him with the most pitiful eyes ever seen in child or woman. The swaying form of Negley was in the passageway,and something of the extent of the disaster broke upon the Irishman.

"Bring him here!" she commanded, taking Negley's arm. "There, I can manage him! Run and get oils and lint!"

He obeyed. The decks were covered with a paste that burned through his shoes. Black clouds were rolling out to sea. Deep thunder of a righteous source answered Pelée's lamentations. The sailors were fighting fire and carrying their dead. The thin, shaken voice of Pugh came from the bridge. The engines were throbbing.

"Eight miles at sea! Eight miles at sea!" Macready repeated. "Th' long-armed divil av a mountain—an' what musht the infightin' have been! Larud hilp the deere man ashore!"

In the store-room, he opened jars of oil and cartons of lint and bandages, for the use of the men; then rushed back to the cabin with a portion. Nature finds work for strong hearts that have lost their heroes. Negley's cracked and twisted boots had been removed, and the ashes cleansed from his eyes and ears and mouth. Another valiant nurse had emerged from a broken romance. The woman who would have fainted yesterday at the smell of burnt flesh was cutting away the clothing from the captain's shoulder. When the ointments and wrappings had been applied to the skipper's wounds, she helped Macready carry the unconscious man to a berth.

"'T is rainin' evenchooalities out," he muttered genially, noting that the work was life to her.

"We must be nearly in-shore by this time," she said slowly.

Denny's effervescence was now corked. Pugh had been putting the *Madame* out to sea since he got control of her. The Irishman felt instinctively that the woman would want to go ashore, which he did n't propose to allow. On the other hand, although he had nothing to do with the running of the ship, he did n't like the idea of saving the *Madame* at the price of her owner's life.

"I dunno," he answered carefully. "'T is har-rd t' see fur th' rain."

His soft magic failed.

"But the ship is moving!" she exclaimed. "Denny, open the door!"

Macready gave way. She heard the steady beat of the engines, and the big seas driving past. She rushed out of the passageway, regardless

of the flood, and peered over the main-deck railing. There was no smoke, no familiar shadow of hills, but a leaden, tumultuous sky and the rollers of the open sea, beaten by a torrential shower. She crossed the charred planking to the starboard side, drenched to the skin in an instant. There was no Pelée, no Saint Pierre! Macready tried to draw her to cover, but she turned upon him furiously.

"You have let them put to sea—you, his friend—while he is held back there, waiting for his ship?"

"What could poor Dinny, that bosses th' galleys, ma'm, do toward runnin' the ship? Thim byes 'ud say, 'Git back t' your patty-pans, you wipe!' But I 've thried, sure, t' kape th' lady from harum this day. You know Captain Negley——"

"Where 's the first officer?"

"Dead, ma'm."

"And the second officer?"

"Th' same."

"In the name of God, who is putting out to sea?"

"Third-officer Pugh, in the name av his dirthy sowl."

"Is that Pugh on the bridge?"

"Ut is."

A moment later the officer in oil-skins turned to face an apparition, wind-swept and drenched as if risen from the sea, who pulled at his coat and called above the deluge:

"Turn back to the city! Did n't they tell you that Mr. Constable is there and needs his ship?"

"Go below, miss. I 'm trying to save his ship for him."

In a stunned way she stared at the officer. "Don't you know he was to be back in two hours?"

Pugh whirled around to Macready, who was standing behind the woman. "You don't seem able to manage one passenger," he said in an ugly tone. "I 'm short-handed, but I 'll get help for *you!*"

The Irishman was too wise to reply.

"But you must turn back!" the woman cried hopelessly. "Captain Negley would never leave his owner to die back there!"

"Captain Negley is not in command now," Pugh said, his small eyes burning wickedly. "Get below or I 'll call the sailors to help you down. I don't need a woman and a snivelling valet to help me run the ship."

Lara turned to the ladder, brushed back the drenched hair from her eyes, and said coldly, slowly, "I see there is a coward in command!"

For that one instant she was a vivid replica of her mother. The viperine face of Pugh turned ashen under her eyes.

Reaching the main-deck, she told Macready to bring two sailors into the owner's cabin. A moment later she was bending over the

"What 's this you 're talkin'? 'T is no bit av a geyser in a dirt-pile as can tell him how t' come an' go."

The screaming of the native women reached them from the hold. Macready opened the door, and a blast of terrible heat entered the cabin. The woman was clutching the arms of the chair and staring at him with the most pitiful eyes ever seen in child or woman. The swaying form of Negley was in the passageway,and something of the extent of the disaster broke upon the Irishman.

"Bring him here!" she commanded, taking Negley's arm. "There, I can manage him! Run and get oils and lint!"

He obeyed. The decks were covered with a paste that burned through his shoes. Black clouds were rolling out to sea. Deep thunder of a righteous source answered Pelée's lamentations. The sailors were fighting fire and carrying their dead. The thin, shaken voice of Pugh came from the bridge. The engines were throbbing.

"Eight miles at sea! Eight miles at sea!" Macready repeated. "Th' long-armed divil av a mountain—an' what musht the infightin' have been! Larud hilp the deere man ashore!"

In the store-room, he opened jars of oil and cartons of lint and bandages, for the use of the men; then rushed back to the cabin with a portion. Nature finds work for strong hearts that have lost their heroes. Negley's cracked and twisted boots had been removed, and the ashes cleansed from his eyes and ears and mouth. Another valiant nurse had emerged from a broken romance. The woman who would have fainted yesterday at the smell of burnt flesh was cutting away the clothing from the captain's shoulder. When the ointments and wrappings had been applied to the skipper's wounds, she helped Macready carry the unconscious man to a berth.

"'T is rainin' evenchooalities out," he muttered genially, noting that the work was life to her.

"We must be nearly in-shore by this time," she said slowly.

Denny's effervescence was now corked. Pugh had been putting the *Madame* out to sea since he got control of her. The Irishman felt instinctively that the woman would want to go ashore, which he did n't propose to allow. On the other hand, although he had nothing to do with the running of the ship, he did n't like the idea of saving the *Madame* at the price of her owner's life.

"I dunno," he answered carefully. "'T is har-rd t' see fur th' rain."

His soft magic failed.

"But the ship is moving!" she exclaimed. "Denny, open the door!"

Macready gave way. She heard the steady beat of the engines, and the big seas driving past. She rushed out of the passageway, regardless

of the flood, and peered over the main-deck railing. There was no smoke, no familiar shadow of hills, but a leaden, tumultuous sky and the rollers of the open sea, beaten by a torrential shower. She crossed the charred planking to the starboard side, drenched to the skin in an instant. There was no Pelée, no Saint Pierre! Macready tried to draw her to cover, but she turned upon him furiously.

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unconscious form of the ship's commander in the berth. She seized his well hand.

"Captain Negley! Oh, Captain—Captain Negley!"

Her voice ranged higher.

The lips of the seaman moved.

"It is I—Miss Stansbury! Listen to me just once! Pugh is a coward—a coward. He is running away! Mr. Constable is still ashore, and we are miles at sea—miles out to sea!"

In a slight opening of the bandages appeared a dazed gray eye.

"Do you hear, Captain Negley? The coward is running away, and Mr. Constable is ashore! Pugh—coward!"

Nature was trying to right herself in the brain of the stricken seaman. In the gray eye, she watched the struggle as she impressed her message. It was torture to bring him back. . . . He asked if the fires were out. . . . He asked for Laird and Plass. The simple problems of time and place were mountains to him. Macready entered with two sailors.

"Command Pugh to turn about! Oh, speak for me—for me!" she implored.

Negley tried to rise. "Bring Pugh here!" he mumbled.

It was a sweet duty for Macready, whose colors had been lowered in the presence of the woman. Pugh gave an order to the man at the wheel, and followed the Irishman below. Lara had held the light in the gray eye.

"What do you mean by putting out without the owner?" Negley demanded thickly.

Pugh's black eyes roved from the face of his superior to the sailors; to the drenched woman who had caused it all; to the hated Macready at the door. They were enemies all.

"As I explained to the lady, I was trying to save the ship," he said.

"Turn back to the harbor at once—full speed!"

Pugh hesitated.

"Turn back, I say! Get to hell out of here!"

"But a fire-fly could n't live in there, sir!"

"Put him in irons—you men!" Negley commanded the sailors. "Macready, lift me to the bridge!"

XVI.

It was after eleven when the *Madame de Stael* regained the harbor. The cloud-burst had spent itself. Out from the land rolled an unctuous smudge which bore suggestions of the heinous impartiality of a great conflagration. The harbor was cluttered with wreckage, a doom-picture for the eyes of the seamen. Dimly, fitfully, through the pall, they saw the ghosts of the shipping—black hulls without helm or hope. The

Madame vented a deep-toned roar, but no answer was returned—not a voice from the wreckage, not the scream of a gull. A sailor heaved the lead, and the scathed steamer bored into the rising heat.

Ahead was emptiness. The woman was standing forward on the main-deck. The wind tunnelled through the smoke, and she saw the hills shorn of her city. The hope that the guns of Pelée had been turned seaward was crushed with other hopes. A cry was wrung from her breast at last. The anchor-chain was dropped, and two men were bearing the brave Negley down from the bridge. Macready hastened to the woman's side with a glass of spirits.

"Arrange to get a small boat, Denny. We must go ashore!" she commanded, recovering self-possession.

Macready felt that it was now time to force matters.

"Mother av God, you can't go ashore yet, Lady!" he exclaimed. "I cud bake a potatie here, sure, in the holla av my hand. What, thin, must it be in that pit av dishtruction?"

He was staring in a smoke-stained face. The purpose there was immovable as granite. The voice that he heard made him wince with fear, lest she should direct upon him words such as had been Pugh's portion.

"Mr. Macready, get a small boat ready! I am going ashore."

"Sure, an' I'll go wit' you, ma'm," he said hastily.

"I did not think you would withhold your aid from *him,* Denny. Make haste," she added gently.

The sailor whom Denny persuaded to accompany them was the old lion, Ernst, who had held the launch at the pier so long, and who had been relieved for the last trip. Water, medicines, food, spirits, and many cakes of ice, thickly wrapped in tarpaulin, were placed in a small boat. The woman suffered herself to be garbed according to the ideas of Macready. One of Constable's pith helmets was upon her head; his rain-coat was buttoned about her, the sleeves rolled up to her hands; and a pair of his shoes was laced over her own. It was difficult to move about in this regalia, but it kept off the withering draughts. The boat was lowered.

A half-hour later, they were forced to put back to the ship. Ernst was whimpering at the oars, his lips twisted in agony. Macready was silent, an eloquent signal of his failing endurance. Lara had not swooned; her will was not broken, but conditions had been encountered which flesh could not conquer. The boat was pulled about to the lee of the steamer, and at a port-hole glass she saw the sneering face of Pugh, still in irons.

There in the boat the three renewed their strength, and another terrific downpour came to aid them. Lara sat in the stern, hands and lips tense, during the cloudburst. It was nearly two in the afternoon

when the boat was bailed, the stock of ice replenished, and a second start made. The sailors gave them a cheer.

Deeper and deeper in toward the gray, low beach the little boat was pulled, its occupants the first to look upon the heaped and running over measure of Saint Pierre's destruction. Denny and Ernst took turns at the oars, sometimes pulling a single blade together. Rare running mates, they were, odd as two white men could be, but matched to a hair in courage. Ernst bent to his work, a grim, stolid mechanism. Denny jerked at the oars, and found breath and energy remaining to assail the world, the flesh, and the devil, which was Pugh, with his barbed and poisoned tongue. The woman, in the stern of the boat, knelt before them, praising, cooling their faces with ice, her words often incoherent, but her spirit unconquerable.

How many times the blue eyes of old Ernst rolled back under the lids, and his grip relaxed upon the oars, only to be recalled by the pleading voice and the face of tragedy before him; how many times the whipping tongue of Macready mumbled, forgetting its object, while his senses reeled against the burning walls of his brain; how many times the splendid spirit of the woman recalled her own lowlier faculties to action and the terrible meaning of the quest—only God and these knew. But the little boat held its prow to the desolate shore.

They gained the Sugar Landing at last, and strange sounds came from the lips of Ernst, as he pointed to the hulk of the launch, burned to the water-line. Gray-covered heaps were sprawled upon the shore, some half-covered by the in-coming tide, some entirely awash. Pelée had brought down the city; and the fire-tiger had rushed in at the kill. He was hissing and crunching still, under the ruins. The woman moaned and covered her face.

"There is nothing alive!" she said with dreadful stress.

"What else could you luk fur—here at the very fut av th' divil?" Macready demanded. "Wait till we get over th' hill, and you'll hear th' burrds singin' an' the naygurs laughin' in the fields an' wonderin' why the milk-man don't come."

"I can live—yes, I can live—until I see our house crushed to the hill, all coated with paste, and those heaps lying about on the ground! . . . 'A woman can't be a friend like a man'! You will stand and uncover your heads—when you see your friend lying upon the ground —and I—I will die!"

She was walking between them, up toward the market-place, fighting back her terrors, which added to the burdens of the men. The opened space was filled with the stones from the houses, hurled there as from a dice-box. Smoke and steam oozed forth from every ruin. The silence was awful as the sight of death. Rue Victor Hugo was effaced, the way up toward the *morne* undiscernible. A breathing pile

of débris barred every way. It was plain that they must make their way southward along the shore.

"If I cud on'y get holt o' that barnacle av a shark's toot', Pugh—if I cud on'y get him here wance bare-futted," Denny gasped—"sure I 'd die happy holdin' av him! D' you think hell is worse than this, ma'm, savin' th' effrontery av the question? Ha!—don't sthep there!"

He pulled her away from a puddle of uncongealed stuff as hot as running iron. . . . Once he had stepped upon what seemed to be an ash-covered stone. It was soft, springy, and vented a wheezy sigh. Rain and rock-dust had smeared all things alike in this gray, roasting shambles.

"Speak—won't you please speak?" the woman cried suddenly.

"It luks like rain, ma'm," Macready's quick tongue offered. "Ernst, lad, seein' as th' halls av refrishment are shut down, wud you mind passin' the dimmiejack. I nade ut."

They were on the shore, nearing the rise of the *Morne d'Orange*. Saint Pierre had rushed to the sea—at the last. The mountain had found the women with the children, as all manner of visitations find them—and the men a little apart. There was nothing to do by the way, no lips to moisten, no voice of pain to hush, no dying thing to ease. Pelée had not faltered at the last. There was not an insect murmur in the air, nor a crawling thing beneath, not a moving wing in the hot gray sky. They traversed a shore of death absolute—these three—and the woman was thinking ahead. Denny's voice was heard again:

"'T is av three sinners I 'm thinkin', fresh come t' hell, an' kickin' about modest fur a place t' sit down—always savin' th' impossibility av an' angil bein' wan av us."

From the shoulder of the *morne* Lara turned back one look. Saint Pierre was like a mouth that had lost its pearls. The land ahead was a husk divested of its fruit. Pelée had cut the cane-fields, sucked the juices, and left the blasted stalks in his paste. The plantation-house pushed forth no shadow of an outline. It might be felled, or lost in the smoky distance. The nearer landmarks were gone—homes that had brightened the *morne* in their day, whose windows had flashed the rays of the afternoon sun as it rode down oversea—levelled like the fields of cane. There was no balm, no saving grace. Pelée had swept far and left only his shroud, and the heaps upon the way, to show that the old sea-road, so white, so beautiful, had been the haunt of man. The mangoes had lost their vesture; the palms were gnarled and naked fingers pointing to the pitiless sky.

She had known this highway in the mornings, when joy was not dead, when the songs of the toilers and the laughter of children glorified the fields; in the white moonlight, when the sweet draughts from the sea met and mingled with the spice from torrid hills, and scent of

jasmine and rose-gardens. . . . The dark eyes under the huge helmet were staring ahead; her lips were parted and white. Though they had passed the radius of terrific heat, she seemed slowly to be suffocating. Macready remembered his voice.

"Things are queer by the sea, ma'm. Wan can't tell th' divil he 's wan whin th' divil 's in command, ma'm. Now, if I 'd ha' tuk Pugh be th' t'roat, as th' sowl av me prodded, I 'd be intertainin' Mr. Constable presently in the bottom av th' ship, togged out head an' fut in irons fur th' occasion, an' he 'd say, 'Dinny, why did n't you sthand be th' lady whin I tould you? Perhaps you can stand be th' bunkers betther, me son. Go to thim, ye goat!' . . . Ernst, lad, you 're intertainin', you 're loquenchus."

The woman was stepping forward swiftly between them. Words died upon Macready's tongue when he saw her face and thought of what she would find ahead. He believed that she would keep her word—that she would break, brain and body—if the mountain had shown no mercy at their journey's end. . . . And Macready did not hope. The man to whom he had tied his own life would be down like the others, and the great house about him! All that a soft Irish heart could feel of terror and bereavement had waged in his breast for hours. To let the woman succumb among her dead was more than he could bear.

There was a vague God to whom Macready had prayed one or twice in his life—a God who had the power to strike blasphemers dead, still tempests, light volcanic fuses, and fell Babylons. He called upon this God now, not to change the dead to life, not to give him back his friend, but to send down the cloak of night to cover the dead from the eyes of the woman.

The ruins of the plantation-house wavered forth from the fog. The prayer had not availed; the day still lived. A swoon had not fallen pitifully upon the woman. He was allowing her to walk forward to her end, this beautiful creature whose courage was more than a man's! . . . Her fingers were upon his sleeve, pulling him forward. She had no need of words from him now. Life remained in her to reach the place ahead. She did not want more life, if the dead were there.

"Wait, ma'm!" he pleaded.

"No, no! I cannot wait!"

"Fur ould Dinny! Take a sip av this firsht."

She saw his terror, and touched the flask to her lips to please him. Then, as if it were to be her last word, she said:

"I thank you both. You have been very brave and kind; but, Denny, don't keep me back—not now!"

"Let me go firsht!" he implored, harboring the mad idea that he might put something out of her sight.

"No!" she screamed, breaking from him, and rushing forward through the fallen gate.

Her cry brought an answer—a muffled answer, the voice from a pit. Macready and Ernst plucked at the charred boards in the circle of ruin.

"Peter, King Peter! Where are you, Great-heart?" she called, laughing, crying, picking at her hands.

"In the cistern—in the old cistern," came the answer. "Why—did—they—let—you—come—here?"

"Did n't I tell you 't wud take more than a sphit av a mountain t' singe hair av him, ma'm?" Macready yelled, dancing about the rim. "Are you hurted, sorr? Tell me, are you hurted?"

He was pushed away, and the woman knelt at the rim, bending far down.

XVII.

Constable rested and reflected in the cistern. It did not occur to him, save in the most flimsy and passing way, to doubt the efficacy of the distance in the case of Lara. She was safe, eight miles at sea, and watched over by Macready, whom he had learned thoroughly to trust. Here was gladness immovable. Second, for the present and to all intents, his own life had been spared. This was not so important in itself, but was exceedingly vital in consideration of the third point—that she loved him, and had said so. His first worry was that Lara might be thinking him dead.

The aspect of Constable's mind being touched upon, it may be well to outline the state of affairs as a third party would see it. In the first place, there was a woman in his arms, a woman whom the fire had touched and in whom consciousness was not; the mother of the world's matchless girl. Then he was sitting upon a slimy stone in a subterranean cell, the floor of which was covered with six inches of almost scalding water, and the vault filled with steam. The volcanic discharge, showering down through the mouth of the pit, had heated the water and released the vapor. An earthquake years before had loosened the stone walls of the cavern, and with every shudder of the earth, under the wrath of Pelée, the masonry lining the cistern tottered. Then, his hand had been torn during the descent of the chain, and the terrific heat in the well livened his burns to exquisite painfulness. But, as has been stated, these were mere cuticle disorders, and the heart of the man sang again and again its tuneful story.

Pelée was giving vent to the after-pangs. Torrents of rain were descending. The man in the cistern had lost track of time. Though replenished with rain, the water was still too hot to step in; therefore, he could not change his position and relieve the tension of his arms. Still, he felt that he owed an astonishing debt to the old cistern. No sudden impulse had brought him there. Since he had discovered the

place in his night's vigil, and examined it more closely the following day, the idea had become fixed in his mind that it might be used at the last minute.

The woman sighed now and stirred in his arms. The first gripping realization took his mind. He waited in embarrassment for her to speak. Would the fact that he had saved her life stand as extenuation for his rough treatment? Constable was by no means sure that he was not about to hear her estimate of him on the old footing, with the rage of a manhandled woman added—the whole a finished document delivered with Mrs. Stansbury's art and force. But she did not yet awake.

His brain worked rapidly now. She had lain upon his shoulder during the descent. Livid dust had fallen through the orifice. His burns were slight. . . . His eyes strained into her face, but the cistern was dark, dark. The fire had touched her hair—he knew that. Her bare arm brushed his cheek, and his whole being crawled with fear. . . . It seemed that hours elapsed. Where had Uncle Joey been at the last? Did Pelée tolerate any favorites? Breen, Soronia, Père Rabeaut, Mondet, the ships in the inner harbor, the thirty thousand of Saint Pierre—were they all wrecked in the mills of the world? . . . But the *Madame* was eight miles at sea! Pelée had waited for the woman. His heart of hearts held this joy.

The breath of life was returning to his burden. She sighed once more, and then, full pityingly, he felt her wince with the pain which consciousness brought.

"What is this dripping darkness?" he heard at last. The words were slowly uttered, and the tones vague, as from one who is dreaming or very close to the Gates. . . . In a great dark room somewhere, in a past life, perhaps, Constable had heard such a voice from some one lying in the shadows.

"We are in the old cistern—you and I, Peter Constable." His tones became glad as he added, "But your daughter is safe at sea!"

"Did you forget something, or did Lara send you for her parasol?"

"I came for you—came to tell you how much we needed you—how much we feared for your life, and to ask you once more——"

"What—an—extraordinary—youth!" she murmured. "Was—there—ever—such—darkness—as—this?"

The cavern was dark, but not utterly black now. The circle of the orifice was sharply lit with gray.

"They will come from the ship to rescue us soon. Please—please turn your face to the light—so! . . . Yes, that will do!"

"Did you not know that I am blind, boy? . . . How big you seem! I should think you would put me down and rest your arms——"

Her face had been turned upward in the descent of the chain! He

steeled himself to speak steadily. There was a cumulative harshness in that *her* face, above all others, so fragile, of purest line, should meet the coarse element, burning dirt. Furies leaped upon him that he had not saved her.

"The water is still hot in the bottom of the cistern," he said. "My arms are not in the least tired."

An interminable interval passed before he heard the voice again, slower, fainter: "And so you came back for me—and you knew Pelée—better! . . . No, the burns do not hurt terribly. My—face—feels—dead. You were not burned—so?"

This was the moment of dreadful memory. Her body, her face, arms, throat, had covered him, as the rusty chain slipped through his hand. The molten stuff had not cracked his flesh because she had stood between.

"I tried to save you—my God! you know that—but you kept the fire from me!"

His voice was broken with rebellion. Then out of a sigh came the words that lived with him always:

"I—would—have—you—know—that—*la Montagne Pelée*—is—artistic!"

All that had been serene partook of strange disorder now. Negley should have made an effort ere this to reach him. The power that devastated the city and with unspent violence swept the *morne* might have reached three leagues at sea! Save that the gray was unchangeable in the roof of the world, he could not believe that all this was one day. . . . Lara would never forgive him for being whole, at the price of her mother's eyes! There seemed no adjustment possible for this cruel play of his service. . . . He called the mother's name softly, but his words made no impress—called in frenzy at last, and felt her shudder in his arms.

"Boy!"

"Yes, yes!"

"Tell Lara that there was no yesterday—no last night! And leave me here—in the dark!"

How long afterwards he never knew, but he awoke to find himself uttering incoherent sentences. The woman was quite dead. . . . The hours drew on into eternity, but the gray still lived in the sky. He loosened his arm, and the blood rushing into the strained limb bore with it a thrashing pain. The water had cooled, but he did not put his burden down. He had not yet fathomed the extent of her surrender, nor the signet and color of her personality upon every word she had spoken. . . . He heard a cry from Lara, and deemed it the encroachment of personal madness. Scornfully he answered. Again

the voice of the woman! He arose and called her name. A shadow darkened the orifice, and he saw his lady in the sky.

It may be in this marvellous world, where men carry on their wars and their wooings, some pursuing their little ways of darkness, some bursting into blooms of valor and tenderness—it may be that after the most exalted passage of agony and terror, two of Earth's people were returned to each other in the strangeness of these. One swooning at the curb of an ancient cistern, under the hot leaden sky, the falling sea before, and Pelée, with his tens of thousands slain, on her right hand; the other in the pit below, standing in the cooling water, and calling upon her to forgive him for failing in that which only the gods could do. It may be that in the collection of Earth's tableaux another such film is curled away—from another age and another cataclysm.

"Niver you worry your hearrt, sorr," called Macready, to whom the voice of his friend had brought imperious consciousness, man-wise, instead of collapse. "Th' faint is nothin'. 'T is a fortune fur thim as can faint fur joy, an' no hurrt in ut, sorr. Have you th' strent' t' do th' over-hand up th' chain, wit' th' fairest av tin t'ousand at th' top, sorr? Ernst, lad, kneel down an' hould th' angil's head agin your knee! You 'll niver be th' same man aftherwarrd, but niver you moind!"

Constable placed his burden upon the stone slabs, caught the chain, and pulled himself free from the water. His weight was a mountain. The five days had done what four had not—played havoc with the one hundred and ninety pounds of manhood which struggled upward under Macready's cheers, and fell across the rim of the cistern into Macready's arms.

Lara awoke and found Constable bending over her. Her eyes rested upon his lacerated hand, upon the swollen veins in his throat and temples. She saw blood upon his clothing, blisters upon his neck, sweat and mire upon his face. . . . The reality came that he was praying for her to forgive him—because her mother had died in his arms.

"Peter, my beloved!" she murmured. "You say—that mother——"

She halted, for the grief uprose in its fullness in her mind. The day had put a look of horror in her eyes that months would not efface. . . . But there was no mortal hurt upon her. Her nostrils, lips, hands—all moved in their way of dear perfection. Some time she would see that he had done his best. . . . Though he had failed in all else, he had saved this masterpiece from harm.

"But if I had not come back, she never would have known," he pleaded. "And she forgave me—I 'm quite sure—as you 'll forgive me——"

"What are you saying?" she cried suddenly. "What do you mean?

It is horrible, but I came thinking to find you all lying here—as they are in the city—*all dead and down*—and I have found my lover living! God is merciful to me!"

Macready and Ernst, afar off, watched the puffs of smoke and steam rise like gray-white birds from the ruins.

"Ernst, lad," said the other, "th' boss an' th' l'adin' lady are havin' an intellechooal repasht in th' cinter av th' sta-age, be th' ould well. Bear in moind you 're a chorus-gurrl, an' conduct yoursilf in accord. Have you a drop av th' dew av Hivin left in th' heel av th' flask, Maudie deere?"

XVIII.

The *Madame* was steaming down from Basse Terre to Saint Pierre. It was the third morning after the tragic Eighth of May. On the evening after the eruption, the ship had touched Fort de France, and left the natives there to join Father Damien's colony. Then the *Madame* was despatched to Dominica, where Constable cabled to New York for officers and men to complete the ship's company, and succeeded also in reaching Mr. Stansbury by cable, with the word that his daughter had been saved, before the planter could get passage for the Whited Sepulchre.

Constable and Lara were sitting together at the cabin-door in the sunlight and soft winds. The girl wore a robe purchased ready-made in Basse Terre. It was white and lustrous, a strange native fabric, which the man regarded with seriousness and awe. This was an item in the first consignment of feminine apparel he had ever had the honor to purchase. The joy was full and rare.

"I come to you empty-handed and very soiled from the heat and travail of the journey, sir," she had told him; "but father will reimburse you."

"Father will be allowed certain privileges, but not that," he had replied, and many were the booties, flounces, ribands, and mysteries which they drew, together and apart, from the treasure-houses of little Basse Terre.

Peter was in white, too, of a freshness only found on shipboard. His right hand was in the swathed state which denotes repairs, and a thickness of lint was fitted under his collar. There was, too, a drawn look about his mouth and eyes, to which the recuperative forces had not yet attended. Negley, multifariously bandaged, was on the bridge, in company with a new officer, secured temporarily at Dominica. The captain was unable to walk, but signified his intention of healing above decks. Constable was regarding the sad face before him, and the beauty of it had made him dumb for several moments.

"Lara," he said finally, "we 'll make the pilgrimage together to Saint Pierre—or the place!"

"She was very beautiful and very proud—our mother!" the girl whispered unsteadily. "She told you to leave her there—in the dark, so that we would never see—how changed she was. I know—how she felt!"

Lara, Peter, and Crusoe made their arduous way up the cluttered road into the Rue de Rivoli. A smoky charnel, Saint Pierre, made human only by the lamentations of those who had come down for their dead from *Morne Rouge* and the hills. The wind was still; and the sun shone through silent towers of smoke, and it was noon. No one had spoken for several minutes. The wine-shop had fallen in part. The stone arch remained, although the wooden door had been levelled and partly devoured by fire. Crusoe remained outside with Lara, while Peter went in to see if the place was safe. They heard his steps upon the stones, the rattle of falling plaster, the unmistakable sound of an empty bottle wheeling and sliding across the pavement. The waiting was long, before he appeared, and beckoned. They followed him into the little stone wine-shop. A breath of coolness still lingered in the dim place, and the fruity odor of spilled wine. The ash-covered floor was packed hard, and still was damp from the gusts of rain through the open door and the broken-backed roof, and from the leakage of burst wine-casks. Steady as a clock ticking there was heard the "drip, drip," of spirit escaping through a sprung seam, from somewhere among the merciful shadows, where the old soldier of France was sitting.

"Lara, dearest, I should have spared you this. Must you go farther?" Peter whispered. "Crusoe and I will be only a moment."

"I am going, too," the girl answered.

The three climbed over the heap of stones, which was the rear doorway, and entered the court from whence the song-birds had flown. Across the drifts of ash, into the dark beyond, they made their way, Constable leading, Crusoe last.

They were sitting together—the lovers. She had been listening, like Desdemona, as he "spake of most disastrous chances—battles, sieges, fortunes." Soronia had been the first to see the sinister face of Iago at the door! She had bent forward and covered in her arms the face of her soldier, her painter of pictures. . . . Thus they had fallen—the adventurer in the shelter of the golden vine. Pelée had covered them with dust—each particle of covering dust fresh-wrought from the fire in which the stars were forged.

"Don't touch, Crusoe!" Peter warned.

Something in the tone caused the man who was accustomed to do as he pleased to forbear from his investigations. After all, his own life had been spared because Constable had taken him captive, and the

trip had paid. Crusoe did not understand what was between the millionaire and the revolutionist. It occurred to him at last that this something must have been greater even than dollars; yet he was not sure. The look upon Constable's face as he led the woman into the sunlight was that of fortunes lost! Crusoe left them there, and made his own way back to Fort de France, to wait for his ship. He was happy to be alive, but he carried a crowning mystery in his brain. This had to do with a millionaire's generosity on the one hand, and a millionaire's perversity on the other. After all, he acknowledged that he knew less of Constable than when he left New York.

Peter and Lara had descended nearly to the shore when she said: "If your strange friend had not come into our lives, we could never have known each other, as we do now. We might have loved and gone our way, without knowing all that it means to be human, without knowing all that our hearts could make us do."

"It all worked out like a mosaic for you and me, Lara. Our valiants fell about us, but *we* were left. Always in our greatest need a man arose to help—Breen, Negley, Ernst, little Denny——"

"Was there work for Pugh to do?" she asked.

"Ah, Pugh—the weak sister! He kept you from going into the harbor too soon! I shall pay him and let him go his way to-night in Fort de France. The sea is a strange mistress to mother two such sons as the lion Negley and the poor little jackal Pugh! . . . Sweetest Lady, I am in love with you and the world! Bear witness that I forgive Pugh—aye, forgive Mondet! See, down the Rue Victor—the wreck of *Les Colonies!* The little editor was there, perhaps, writing his paragraphs on the stanchness of Pelée! May his soul rest in peace! . . . Once, Lara, my mother said, 'Peter, some time you will breathe the breath of life!' I know what she meant now. I wonder how she knew?"

"Mothers are close to the heart of things, Big Man. Mothers——"

Lara halted. There were tears in her eyes. To the right of them, among the ruins, a wailing woman had found her own.

They had traversed the *Morne d'Orange.* The sun bathed the fields. The wreck of the great plantation-house was hunched closer to the ground. As he neared the rim of the cistern, Peter halted suddenly by the stricken lianas, and beckoned Lara back. The well-curbing was broken away, and the earth for yards surrounding had caved into the pit.

"Mondet was right, after all, about the earthquake," he said.

Without speaking, they stood there for several moments. Then Peter took her hand and led her back toward the boat at the Sugar Landing.

Night had fallen. Up through the streets of the capital, they strode,

the man and woman. Casements were open to the stars and the sea, but the people were dull with grief. Martinique had lost her first-born, and Fort de France, the gentle sister of Saint Pierre, was bowed in the spirit of weeping. They had loved and leaned on each other, this boy and girl of the Mother island.

Through the silent crowds Peter and Lara walked, a part of the silence, passing the groves and towers, where the laws of France are born again for the little aliens; treading streets of darkness and moaning, streets of light and tears. A field of fire-lights shone ahead, their red glow shining upon new canvas. This was the little colony of Father Damien—brands plucked from the burning of Saint Pierre. They passed the edge of the bivouac. A woman sat nursing her babe, fire-light upon her face and breast, drowsy little ones about her. Coffee and night-air and quavering lullabies; above all, beautiful Josephine in marble, smiling dreamily among the stars. It was the most potent instant of Constable's life; some great joy or thrilling tragedy was breathing upon his heart. He saw a tear upon the cheek of Lara. The voice of Father Damien came from the distance:

"Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God hath already accepted thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest, all the days of thy life——"

There was a cry from behind. It was from the lips of the woman with the babe at her breast. She had caught the garments of Lara in her hands, and, half kneeling, with her face toward Peter, she exclaimed in a voice of joy:

"He is come! He is come!"

The silent camp uprose with a shout of gladness. The remnant of Saint Pierre pressed about the man and woman, crying, laughing, kissing their hands. Constable had not dreamed of such glorifying gratitude; and yet he was humbled to tears. These were so few, and Saint Pierre so vast!

"Father Damien," he said, when his voice came to him, "this lady 'hath already accepted my works.' We are come to take you out to our ship——"

"Not on the ship, but here—now!" the old priest cried. "It is the moment of ten thousand years!"

And so they were restored to each other, in the midst of their devoted, in the fire-light, beneath the Seven Palms and the blessings of the Empress.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BARNUM

By Mary Moss

CHARLES DICKENS himself was responsible for the memoirs of Grimaldi, the famous clown; but, trusting so delicate a task to no strange hand, Phineas T. Barnum, at the age of forty-five, wrote his own biography.

This amazing volume was once hawked about at the circus, along with pink lemonade and kindred luxuries; it even received notice in serious magazines. But now, fifty odd years after publication, it has been completely forgotten. Nevertheless, in its way, the showman's account of himself is hardly inferior to Benjamin Franklin's autobiography, at least in the matter of psychological interest. The distinguishing trait of both memoirs is their extraordinary candor, and Barnum's frequent quotations from Franklin prove a sympathetic intimacy with the earlier philosopher's actions and point of view. The whole book forms a valuable revelation of certain phases of American character, with its conviction of personal piety, its immense tolerance, and a certain incurable strabismus by which personal virtue and unblushing trickery appear to mingle without causing any one the slightest surprise or discomfort.

Trickery and family virtue surrounded little Phineas from his cradle in that happy Connecticut home, where he first saw light in 1810. Barnum's revered grandfather, Phineas Taylor, began his cherished grandson's education early by fooling him about a tract of worthless swamp land. As a small boy, Phineas already manifested a power of combination and a dislike to manual labor. His efforts to get on in the world are truly edifying. Highly religious, strictly moral (in the American sense, by which a convicted thief or a murderer may be a perfectly "moral" man), Barnum never contemplated working, as ordinary people understand the term. His energies ran to backing doubtful enterprises, managing lotteries, using his nimble wits in a queer border-land of roguery. He was scrupulously honest in his deal-

ings with bogus patents, keeping to the letter of his word—a word usually capable of several interpretations. Full of the wisdom of Sancho Panza, he revelled in an age of practical jokes, in a layer of society where the successful "rise" always justified its brutality. Hoaxes old as the pyramids here take new form, and his relish for humbug is unimpaired, whether he be humbugger or victim. Only once is his serenity visibly ruffled. Although he may be driven to defend his rights (even a shotgun comes in, occasionally), he never feels annoyance at any attempt to impose on him until a benevolent old gentleman with whom he has been chatting in the streets of Liverpool suddenly charges a shilling for information volunteered. This indeed so shocked Barnum that after a lapse of years he chronicles it with unabated sense of wrong.

His first attempts as a showman are richly diverting. Having opened the siege of New York with a wife, a family, and a few debts as entire capital, he nevertheless managed to buy a decrepit negro woman, Aunt Joice Heth, upon evidence, quite satisfactory to himself, of her being one hundred and sixty-one years of age, and the authentic "mammy" of General Washington. People actually flocked to see this wretched old paralytic, and to hear her talk of "Marse George" and croon revival hymns. Barnum realized a comfortable sum from this venture, and though the autopsy proved Aunt Joice to be in her eighties at most, he consoled himself by the reflection that she was ugly enough to be at least two hundred! In fact, his power of belief often amounted to a valuable asset. When his "naturalist" questioned the genuineness of a stuffed mermaid upon whose acquisition they were debating, Barnum logically asked, "If you can't see how it is made, why do you suppose it is manufactured?"

"Because I don't believe in mermaids," replied the naturalist.

"That is no reason at all," said Barnum. "And therefore I'll believe in mermaids and hire it."

There stands his creed, frankly set forth, but he adds that his conscience always condoned any small imposture, not only because people clamored to be deceived and enjoyed it, but because he never failed to give them their full money's worth of real entertainment, so that a sham or two over still left them considerably in his debt.

But this is anticipating. Between Aunt Joice and his final establishment as owner of the American Museum in New York (here his method of purchase shows him in the Rockefeller class, *hors concours*), there was a long period of hazardous enterprise upon the road. This part of his life reads almost like a modern Gil Blas. Dollars pouring

in at the box-office! Watches pawned to escape arrest! Thriving companies of superior freaks and artists, companies reduced by desertion and accident to one insecure little musical prodigy! Journeys through the South in wagons, trips down the Mississippi! Always the same candor, always the same piety, always the same sense of a big, restless, kind-hearted personality, unscrupulous, humorous, with the most baffling mixture of roguery and high ideals. This Odyssey is as eventful as Huckleberry Finn's, and not far behind it in interest. Every trick of the guild is tranquilly laid bare, every device for exciting popular curiosity, every mystery of the road, and not by way of confession, by no means as a reformed showman, since in 1855 Barnum's career was not half run. He had merely gauged his public, and knew to a certainty that the critical would be appeased by his temperance lectures, and that to the worldly his shrewdness would more than atone for any disparity between his statements and chilly truth. You read of these journeys with increasing admiration for his virtuosity in manipulating fact and event, for his growing surety of touch, his audacity.

Of all published accounts of America in Europe, beyond doubt the funniest is his narrative of the trip to England with General Tom Thumb and Mr. and Mrs. Stratton, the General's parents, and this party's capture of London. At that time dwarfs were quoted so low on the English market that tuppence was thought an exorbitant admission fee. Barnum had to work up public interest to the shilling point!

Now, while a spice of fiction possibly enters into his record of General Tom Thumb's reception by the queen and the nobility, the fact remains that Barnum coined money and gained European reputation. If his description of the Rothschilds' drawing-room is based largely upon fancy and the Arabian Nights, there is no ignoring the very queer fact that Queen Victoria more than once received General Tom Thumb. Think of the moment when they actually placarded Egyptian Hall with "Closed this evening, General Tom Thumb being at Buckingham Palace, by command of Her Majesty." After that, continental kings and queens came to them as a matter of course, and on regaining democratic America, instead of being exploited and done, the General shone with fresh lustre as the plaything of royalty. And throughout this arduous campaign of advertising, the tireless Barnum was thirstily sight-seeing. Nothing in the world is more cheering than his disgust at Stratton, who refused to thrill over the field of Waterloo, and was the kind of man to spend six weeks in Boston "without once visiting Bunker Hill."

The whole unconscious picture of Barnum the tourist being offered

"tall" stories by professional guides and not more than half liking it, is as curious a study as can be found in records of human inconsistency. The crown of his career, however, even surpassing the later triumph of Jumbo, is not the apotheosis of the dwarf. Jenny Lind's visit to America must ever remain one of the most confusing episodes in the history of song-birds. Barnum engaged her on hearsay, without any very definite information about her, and nowhere does he pose as a musical expert.

"I may as well here state," he confesses, "that although I relied prominently upon Jenny Lind's reputation as a great musical artiste, I also took largely into my estimate of her success with all classes of the American public, her character for extraordinary benevolence and generosity. Without this peculiarity in her disposition, I never would have dared to make the engagement which I did, as I felt sure that there were multitudes of individuals in America who would be prompted to attend her concerts *by this feeling alone.*" The italics are not his, but he knew his ground. They met her on the wharf. They thronged by thousands to hear her, because she gave to the poor. And, quite artlessly, Barnum notes his relief on finding at the first concert that she really could sing!

This extraordinary and diverting book leaves a definite impression upon any thoughtful mind. It is an invaluable side-light upon a real character, inexplicably blended of gifted impresario, thimble-rigger, and preacher. And nothing in it is stranger than its close—an exordium upon the drudging practicalness of the Americans, their lack of suitable holidays and rational enjoyments. "The consequence is," he says with some truth, "that with the most universal diffusion of the means of happiness ever known among any people, we are unhappy." Thereupon he claims to be seriously rated as a national benefactor, quotes Robert Herrick, Ellery Channing, gives the names and ages of his daughters, and, with an excerpt from Sir William Temple, brings to a close one of the most curious pieces of picturesque literature that America has yet produced.

AN IDOL

BY KATHERINE FAY

O THOU within whose arms for me still lies my heaven,
Enshrined within my heart, guarding the love I 've given,
I keep an idol, "Trust in Thee," and guard from prying eye of day,
Lest by that honest light I 'm forced to see my Idol's feet are clay.

MISS CARMICHAEL AND THE JANITOR

By Adèle Marie Shaw

MISS CARMICHAEL was pink, pretty, and young. The janitor did not approve of Miss Carmichael. She had come to teach in the "Washington Grammar" after the death of Miss Gadey, who had expired in the full dignity of her seventy-three years without ever noticing anything offensive in the condition of her class-room. Indeed, Miss Gadey's eyes had never been of the best; her class-room backed up with inconvenient familiarity to the tenements behind, and the gratings that kept out tenement thieves further subdued the light of day.

Now Miss Gadey was gone, and this young thing with a pink face was in her place. And the young thing's eyes were good. James Lyons, the janitor, who was first cousin once removed to the wife of Assemblyman Doheny, had a store of knowledge quite irrelevant to the business of janitoring, but he could not account for Miss Carmichael's appointment. Yet here she was, this pink and white absurdity, brought into the city from "up state somewhere," and already she was making trouble for James Lyons. It was three o'clock, and she had left her "kept-ins" to the care of another teacher while she complained to the principal about the janitor. James Lyons could see her waiting her turn at the principal's desk. He armed himself with a duster, and drew near with the privileged.

"My room is very dirty," said Mary Carmichael to the principal. She stood primly by that excellent man's desk and enunciated her words distinctly. Principal Heise scanned the horizon to see if the janitor was in the offing. The janitor was. Mr. Heise lowered his voice.

"Vat iss?" he asked gently—very gently, lest Mr. Lyons hear.

"My room, Mr. Heise, Number Fourteen. It 's disgracefully dirty. The corners look as if they had n't been really scrubbed for years. The floor——"

"Diss iss an oldt puilding, Miss Carmichael, and hardt to geep glean," put in Mr. Heise pleasantly, letting his answer reach the ears of Mr. Lyons, now drawn nearer. Mr. Lyons's cousin's husband,

even from the long range of the capital, had been able to hit offenders in Barge City with miraculous accuracy.

"All the more reason for the janitor's being particular," began Mary again. "Look at my dress!" Miss Carmichael pointed to the bottom of her tailored skirt. "See *this.*"

This was evidence no man of sensibility could behold unmoved. To add to the trim spotlessness of Miss Carmichael's gown such vile bordering was truly wanton. Even Mr. Heise was impressed. But he kept his impression to himself. Miss Carmichael, assured of victory, because her cause was just, retired.

Mr. Heise prepared to depart swiftly, lest she return. He locked his desk and emerged into the hall. The janitor's assistant, an ancient woman in the garb of pictured furies, was wielding a mammoth feather duster upon the floor of the opposite room in the place of an absent broom; through the thick haze raised by her labors she loomed dimly awful, a portentous figure.

Outside the schoolhouse door Mr. Lyons was consuming a fat cigar. He himself was not accustomed to engage in the more arduous activities of cleaning; his it was to watch over the safety of the building. Who knew how soon some one might want to steal the "Washington Grammar"? He missed the thirty-five cents he had to pay the old woman, for his salary was only three thousand dollars, and out of that he had to hire the care of the furnaces. Yet even with the help of his wife—haled to his assistance in any emergency like graduation or Saturday blackboard-washing—he could not dispense with the "assistant."

"Pleasant day, Mr. Lyons," said the principal, with non-committal quiet. Mr. Heise would not needlessly stir up hornets, but he also would not openly bend the knee to the school tyrant.

"Huh!" replied Mr. Lyons, and vouchsafed no more. Miss Carmichael had not been properly "*put down.*"

The painful spectacle of the grimy room where she struggled with the infant intellects of her fifty-five pupils roused Miss Carmichael afresh to wrath with each beholding. She spoke with freedom to the friendly teacher in Room Fifteen.

"I 'm sure the trouble with the rest of you is cowardice," she pronounced, one hat-pin impeding her utterance, while she wrestled with the head of another imbedded in her hat. "You just let that man walk right over you."

"It 's better to be walked over than to starve," replied the friendly teacher; "or, rather, it 's better to be walked over than to see your mother starve. I can't afford to be out of position for a single day. When Mr. Lyons tells me that it is n't his business to help me get

a stuck window open, I just let the babes go airless, and wait for the carpenter."

"And the carpenter comes once a quarter! I can't understand it," said Miss Carmichael. "You're afraid. You're all afraid. What could that great hulking bully do to you? And if he did it, you could show him up."

The other teacher looked at her with concern. "See here, my dear," she added, "you quarrel with Mr. Heise if you want to, but, for heaven's sake, keep on the right side of the janitor!"

Great was the scorn of Miss Carmichael. To be a free-born American and such a coward! But her scorn was mixed with pity.

Wrath again inflamed her mind when after school on that same day the janitor broke in upon her work.

"You ben gettin' a good many ink spots 'round this place. I want 'em cleaned up 'fore Sat'day," he announced loudly from the door.

Miss Carmichael lifted her eyes from the thirty-second arithmetic paper she had corrected since dismissal, and fixed them on Mr. Lyons's face. Then she dropped them to the work, put down a neat *R* for *right* and a neat *F* for *failure* upon the last two examples of the last page, and wiped the red ink from her pen.

"Johnny Wohllebe and Susy L'Hommedieu," she said quietly to the two "kept-ins," who were writing *sensible* and *separate* each a hundred times, "you may be excused to go home." She pronounced their names as they did, "Wollerber" and "Ler-Hommy-dew."

"I 'm speakin' t' yer," said the janitor. "Yer 'd better listen."

"You should n't speak to me in that way," answered the girl. "I shall not take orders from you." Her voice was unusually low, but its inflections were straight.

"Jest you clean up them spots. We c'n do the talkin' afterward." Mr. Lyons readjusted the unfailing cigar with a slightly added emphasis in his accustomed scowl.

To her own vast and even limitless amazement, Miss Carmichael cleaned up the spots. Mr. Heise sent her a written notice to the effect that spots had been discovered upon the floor of her room, and that for the removal of this incriminating evidence of infant insubordination she would be held responsible. She cleaned them up herself, on her hands and knees, protected by gloves and a kitchen apron, and assisted by a scraper, soap, rags, disinfectant, hot water from the nearest house, and acid from the drug store. She made of each one a tiny island of scoured and shining board standing out from the surrounding gloom of dirt like beacons on a night-bound coast.

Then she respectfully asked the principal to observe the effect.

"You see," said Miss Carmichael, "if that janitor did his work, my room would be clean."

"Yess, yess—it iss looking fery nice. Now the chiltren vill pe more careful, yess?"

"Looking nice! It's looking perfectly awful!" groaned Miss Carmichael.

The next day she found upon her desk a summons to the office. She had used acid on the floor without the permission of the janitor.

"Acid on a hardwood floor!" growled Mr. Lyons, deepening his scowl.

"Hardwood fiddlesticks," replied Miss Carmichael. "My children are always running splinters into their boots from your hardwood floor!"

James Lyons still further magnified the accusing scowl, but the result did not meet his expectations. Either Miss Carmichael had an unknown backer who was very powerful, or she was ignorant. For a week he walked warily, but his wrath heated at the suppressed fires of his curiosity. He investigated. She had made her application in writing from Fayetteville, and none of the Washington Grammar school committee had any connection with Fayetteville. He knew them all. She had been appointed "on her merits," they told him. "Huh!" said Mr. Lyons again. "She's ignorant. She's gotter have a lesson."

During the next ten days Miss Carmichael was continually in disgrace with the office. She was reported (by the janitor) for "allowing her pupils to abuse school furniture," and, sure enough, jagged scratches were found upon the varnished desks of Number Fourteen. She was reported (by the janitor's assistant) for having a room "disorderly at recess." She was reported (by a teacher on the floor below) because the noise in Miss Carmichael's room was "so awful you could n't hear yourself think, much less teach." This teacher's brother was a fellow laborer with Mr. Lyons in the political vineyard. She always got her chalk and paper before the janitor had time to distribute the supplies to any room but hers, and no spots were ever found on her floor.

These things were all mysterious to Miss Carmichael, but she suspected the source of her discomforts and disgraces.

"What has this school done that it should be at the mercy of that illiterate bully?" she asked aloud, and was overheard. Mr. Lyons was eavesdropping.

"I shall have a plain talk with him. It's pitiful the way people bow down to that dreadful man," confided Miss Carmichael, on an evening somewhat later. She was talking to a new acquaintance. She

was too young not to talk "shop," and she interpreted the intentness of her listener's look as the evidence of an interest deep as her own in the subject of tyrannical janitors.

Sandys was the name of the new acquaintance. He was uncle by marriage to the Ogilvies, and the Ogilvies also came from Fayetteville. It was at the house of the Ogilvies that they were talking. Mr. Sandys was not young, like Miss Carmichael, but he appeared more youthful; his old age was greenly vigorous, while Miss Carmichael's pink prettiness was staid almost to solemnity when she discoursed upon the janitor. In Mr. Sandys's small, alert eyes was a force of authority that contradicted sharply a full-fed, jovial manner.

"I rather think, young woman, I got you your appointment," he said, still fixing her with the interested look. They had for the moment disposed of the initial theme.

"What——" began Miss Carmichael.

"I dropped in on Holley—he's on your committee—one evening in the midst of a meeting," went on Mr. Sandys, disregardful of interruption. "I had a chum once named Carmichael."

"Yes?" said Miss Carmichael.

"I like the name. They were raking over candidates. 'Take the Carmichael,' I told 'em. They must have thought I meant it. Good thing eh?—what?" He smiled; shrewd little wrinkles flickered at the corners of the alert eyes. Then, "What was your father's name?" he asked suddenly.

"O'Neil—Thomas O'Neil—but my uncle, Peter Carmichael, brought me up, and I took his name," responded the pretty teacher, pleased and garrulous. She liked this nice old man's interest in her, but, of course, he was joking about the appointment.

"Pete Carmichael—and his sister married an O'Neil." A light softly reminiscent toned down the sharpness of the old man's gaze. "Ye've a look like Peter; I knew 't was somebody. He was a good fighter, was Peety."

"And I've got your picture, the two of you in great collars, and queer hats in your hands!" cried Mary Carmichael. "Uncle Peter gave it to me before he died."

The gleam came back to Mr. Sandys's swift glance. "'T was the year at the university that daguerrotype was taken—the year I ran for America. Pete helped me off." Laughter crumpled his smooth cheeks. "Dublin and my father's house got a bit warm for me. Politics is a poor game for the young!"

"It seems to be a very dishonest game for any one, the way things are run in these big cities," commented Miss Carmichael, with tightened lips. "I should hate to have any one I cared for mixed up with it."

"Quite so, my dear, quite so—and it 's good advice you 'll give the man you keep out of it," approved the friend of Peter. The Ogilvies wore a curious expression.

"So you 're Petey's niece and Kate's daughter," went on Mr. Sandys. "Well, the world's not so wide, not so wide, eh?—what? Who 's that janitor that's going to get the plain talk, now—Jim Lyons?"

"Yes; how did you know?" asked Miss Carmichael all in a breath.

"Bring this girl along to-morrow night, Nell; we 'll go out the River Road to Grouard's, and come back by the old boulevard after a bit of supper? Can you come?" Mr. Sandys took his cigar from his mouth, and looked genially from one woman to the other.

"I should love it," answered the girl, with staccato emphasis. "It would take the taste of that"—she made a face—"out of my mouth. I 've really cried over it when I 've been alone. It 's so hard to fight when no one backs you up. But I 'm not afraid," she added briskly. "I won't be. I 'm going to make that man clean up my room, and stop insulting me with his orders."

"Orders you round, does he?" Mr. Sandys's look gave her a twinge of surprise; he seemed angry. Then he drew a smiling breath, puffing a fine haze of smoke between them, and spoke with benign encouragement. "Let us hope he 'll have a change of heart," he said. "There 's a great deal in a plain talk."

The next day gave no opportunity for the talk. The janitor was away. For that there was a reason so wholly alien to Miss Carmichael's experience that she could not have guessed it if she had been given her lifetime to spend in guessing. Two things had brought about a state of hostility more virulent than she imagined: her defiance of the janitor, and her unkindness to Miss Goggins. Miss Goggins was the teacher whose thinking had been so interrupted by the class of Miss Carmichael. Now, once upon a time Miss Goggins had asked Miss Carmichael to leave her friend of Number Fifteen and eat her luncheon with the Goggins coterie, and Miss Carmichael had said that she was pledged to the friendly teacher in Fifteen.

"That 's too bad," said the friendly teacher, when she heard about it. "Miss Goggins has a lot of influence."

"I don't care; she 's dreadfully vulgar, and her friends are awful. And they tell stories I don't consider nice," replied Miss Carmichael, who was sharp of ear.

"It 's a pity," repeated the friendly teacher.

"Oh dear! must you even *eat* in fear and trembling, and smile at horse-play, and pretend you like people you can't bear because they

may stick a knife into you!" snapped the exasperated Miss Carmichael. "I 'd rather lose my position and done with it than go creeping round, a slave to every one from the janitor up!"

"The janitor down, you mean," corrected the friendly teacher.

There was one teacher who was more than friendly. Miss Carmichael liked him. He was a thin little fellow, with a weak voice and an anxious face. He was more than friendly, because he was grateful. With his wife and baby he boarded where Miss Carmichael boarded. His wife was sick and timid, and neither he nor she knew anything about babies. Miss Carmichael had taken the three under her vigorous wing. Had n't she been all through the teething period with her little niece? She cheered and enlivened and at times intoxicated the timid Mrs. Mudge by her cheerful vigor. On her way about the huge school building, Miss Carmichael, if she met Mr. Mudge, smiled her quick, heart-warming smile, for her heart was quite as warm as her independent temper, and Mr. Mudge flushed gratefully, thinking of Mrs. Mudge and the baby.

Both Miss Goggins and Mr. Lyons saw the flush. Had not many a mild exterior like that of Mr. Mudge concealed the soul of a Caligula? They swelled with the protective instinct of the powerful who would rescue imperilled infancy. Then began the circulation of vague but penetrating rumor. And Miss Carmichael's room grew dirtier and dirtier.

So it happened that on the day that was to culminate in the joy of the ride and the "bit of a supper" the janitor was absent, and Miss Carmichael could not have her plain talk with him. Mr. Lyons was hunting up the members of the Washington Grammar school committee, to lay before them his belief that Miss Carmichael was no proper teacher for the young. In his roamings he met but one inattentive ear—Holley's.

"Don't you run your head into a trap," was all Holley said, and sent him about his business.

The words stayed in his mind, and he was still chewing the cud of their recurring annoyance when Holley passed him in an automobile, deep in talk with Matthew Sandys.

From the back platform of a Wedgerley Avenue car Mr. Lyons bowed respectfully, lifting his hat as if a wind had snatched it, when he saw Sandys. His cousin-by-marriage was a big man at the capital, but he was a mere dot on the political landscape compared with Matthew Sandys. So Mr. Lyons bowed with great energy.

Mr. Sandys evidently did not see the bow. Mr. Lyons's mind went back to why Holley had turned him down, and to the consideration of his own course about Miss Carmichael. If she came to him humbly enough, should he let her off?

Thus communing, he reached the street corner he wanted, which was also the Ogilvies' corner. The Ogilvies were not in politics, and Mr. Lyons had never heard of them. This part of his journey was concerned with a bit of rent collecting. As he moved down the street he perceived that the automobile which had passed him, carrying Holley and Matthew Sandys, was standing before one of the doors directly in his path. Holley was no longer to be seen, but Matthew Sandys, smiling and plainly respectful in manner, was assisting the passage of a young woman down the steps. Upon the Ogilvies, also smiling and wearing a holiday air of anticipation, Mr. Lyons bestowed no glance. Rooted, paralyzed, dry of throat, and quaking like the aspen of the field, he let a goggling stare remain in horrified fixedness upon the young woman who was the object of so much care to Mr. Sandys.

Laboriously and without a thought of dinner, Mr. Lyons made again the rounds of the day. At each place he set forth circumstantial retraction. He found that he had been altogether wrong. He could n't lay his head on the pillow till he had set it right. Would they please say nothing about it? Would Mr. Holley kindly forget it? Mr. Holley was unresponsive. He had not been chosen to deal with James Lyons, but he knew who had. He said nothing, and he did it the most alarming way. Mr. Lyons looked ill when the browbeaten wife of his bosom, she who washed the blackboards on Saturday, but wore the largest diamonds in church on Sunday, pressed upon him belated refreshment.

Never was the triumph of courage more amazingly proved than in the plain talk conducted by Miss Carmichael and listened to by Mr. Lyons, janitor of the "Washington Grammar." Mr. Lyons spoke with sincere emotion when at the end of the interview he said he hoped that Miss Carmichael harbored no "hard feelin's." Miss Carmichael gave him her hand in a firm little grasp and went forth triumphant.

It was a victory not only for Number Fourteen but for the whole of the "Washington Grammar," that became as it were overnight clean to the degree Mr. Lyons was able to conceive as the limit of endurable cleanliness. With the ardor of one who buttresses an endangered job Mr. Lyons labored. A layer of dirt was taken off each room. The thick cushion over the doors, the windows, the pictures, the woolly heaps under the teachers' desks, still bred their germs in unmolested peace, but the floors no longer added to the hem of a teacher's skirt a gray fuzz.

"It is a lesson to me," confided Miss Carmichael to her friend Mr. Sandys. "I shall try never to be afraid again when I see my duty."

"That 's right," said Mr. Sandys.

THE MARTYR

By Owen Oliver

"THE Martyr. Guido Renti." They say it is the picture of the year; and I see that you have put three crosses against it in the catalogue.

His best, you think? It is his last, any way. He went mad when he finished it. A pity? No, I don't think so.

It is n't a story that I 'd tell to every one; but you and I have known each other a good many years. Take the big chair, and a cigar out of the little yellow box. I don't give *them* to everybody either. There are precious few people who reckon when you come to add up your life, and—I 'll tell you, old man.

As you say, it is a painful picture. No, I have n't been to the gallery; don't want to; don't need to. I saw it once, and that was enough. I am not likely to forget it. I could describe every line; every fold of the rope that binds her to the post and leaves her arms free to beat the air. They 're twisted like this, if you recollect. And you can see her features twisting under the veil. Wonderful piece of painting, that veil, is n't it? You can make out a woman's face quite plainly; and yet you could n't say what she is like; would n't know her if you met her in the street. I suppose that is the fascination of it. You can imagine any woman you know struggling there. The figure, even, is n't defined—just draped shoulders rising out of the smoke and flames; thin, licking flames, beginning to catch the drapery. And her hair—— Just fancy a woman—— Ugh! Pass the whiskey, old man.

The fellow who painted it was a mongrel Spanish-Greek Italian, with the bad qualities of all three races, and none of the good. He finished it at Algeciras the spring before last. I was staying at the Hotel Reina Cristina, and met him. If you can imagine a big, dark, handsome man, who had shrunk and grown pale and wizened; and give him eyes like huge black beads, and splendid white hands, you 've got him. I merely passed the time of day with him; but then, you know, I 'm not a friend-making man. I did not get much beyond the time of day with most of the English people at the hotel.

There were seventeen of them, besides a consumptive young fellow and his wife—a wonderful butterfly woman. You might have thought she was nothing but wings and a laugh; a *pretty* little laugh. She was

a singularly attractive woman, not much more than a girl; about twenty-three; now she 'll be five-and-twenty.

The seventeen had a good deal to say about her. They thought that she ought to have been weeping over her husband all the time, instead of flitting about and laughing. I 'd an idea myself that he liked to see her laughing, and it kept him going, poor beggar. He could n't bear to be treated as an invalid, and it would have frightened him to death if she had fussed him too much. She was pretty good to him, if you noticed; and, though she enjoyed herself in the daytime, she always sat with him in the evenings. On the whole, I thought she was rather fond of him; but you may take it that I was prejudiced in her favor. You shrug your shoulders, I notice. My dear chap, I know you to a quarter of an inch! The seventeen shrugged *their* shoulders —hang them!—only they shrugged them at her, not me.

They talked about her, as I said; and presently I heard. I think some of them made my acquaintance on purpose to tell me—the good, tabby people. It was Guido Renti, the painter, they whispered. She went to his studio every afternoon, while her husband had his nap. A hot climate always affected his liver, he explained, and made him drowsy. He would not confess his weakness, even to himself.

When he had lain down, and his butterfly wife had bunched up his pillows, and pulled the mosquito curtains round him, and blown him a kiss—I 've seen her through the open window—she used to flit off to the studio. They knew it was to the studio, because some of them had followed her, to make sure. Very good people are very curious about those who are not very good! One day I followed her myself. I am no more curious than good, as a rule, but—well, I did.

About the time that her husband got up, she came back. When she came back she used to look over-serious for a butterfly; as if she 'd flown through a cobweb and was n't quite happy about her wings! I met her once or twice, and she started and looked half-scared when I spoke to her. I always spoke to her after the seventeen began to cut her. I made friends with her, in fact. It was partly because I wanted to—that 's easy to believe, I see—and partly—this is harder to believe—on account of her husband. I liked the poor chap; and I knew that those butterfly women must have some one to admire their pretty wings; and thought that, if my admiration would do instead of Renti's—well, I 'm no saint; but under the circumstances—— Yes, I know you know, old man; but thanks for saying it. She would have been safe with me—and was.

Anyhow, I did make friends with her, and with her husband. He was quite a good sort; and he trusted me, and was glad for me to look after the butterfly. I shan't tell you her name. I generally invited her to go for a walk in the morning, and she always seemed

pleased to go. They used to ask me to sit with them in the evening and play three-handed bridge. I hate it, as you know, and I believe she did; but he was fond of it, and it amused him. So I was a good deal with her, except in the afternoon. Then she would have none of me, but went off alone. She seemed as though she could not face me when she returned. I often watched her walking along, looking tired and worried and almost grown-up, till she got in sight of the hotel. Then she used to wake herself up and toss her head and smile, and walk briskly. She made a pretty picture sweeping defiantly through the gates and up the path. I 've often wished that I 'd had a camera, and taken her. On the whole, it was n't necessary. I don't forget.

At first she used to recover her spirits as soon as she came in; and after dinner she would be as bright as—bottled sunshine! But after a while she grew quieter; and when she was gay her gaiety struck me as artificial. Sometimes I caught her looking as if something haunted her. She had fits of abstraction during our walks. I remember one day we stood and looked at the sun-sparkles on the bay and the straits. They glistened like millions of diamonds.

"You have a rival this morning," I told her.

"Don't!" she cried. "I think sometimes, when the sea looks so bright, how sad it must feel underneath—with all its secrets."

"All the braver," I said, "to go on smiling! Yes, the sea has some secrets. Most of us have. Perhaps *you,* little lady."

She looked at me for a moment, with a flushed face. What a child she seemed!

"I cannot tell you, Mr. Mordaunt," she said, almost tearfully. "I wish I could."

"I wish you could, my dear child," I answered. She was fifteen years younger than I. "But since you can't—don't have any secrets to stop your pretty smiling. Come along!"

One afternoon she came back to the hotel very pale and silent. She had "such a headache," she told me, when I stopped her, and she was going to lie down. She did not appear until dinner-time. She was feverishly lively then; but when the meal was over she went to bed. Her husband seemed lost without her, so I took him out in the gardens, and we sat in two chairs between the shrubs. I had carried his cushions and arranged them, and put his chair at the right angle, and a light rug to fend off the evening breeze—in short, did all the little things that she did for him in such a gay, careless way that you scarcely knew them done; and then he talked to me about her.

"She bears up well," he remarked; "but she worries more than you 'd fancy. I—sometimes I think I shan't pull round."

"Nonsense!" I told him. "You're pulling round visibly. I can see a change every day."

"You really think so?" He brightened up in a moment. He was very hopeful. They all are.

"Not a doubt of it," I assured him.

"If I should pull through, it will be her doing," he declared. "I wish you knew what—what I feel about her."

"I know, old chap," I said. "I know." There was a big lump in my throat—a confounded big lump.

"You see," he went on, shading his eyes with his hand, "it isn't just what she does for me. She does an awful lot, though you might n't notice——"

"I notice," I said.

"I thought *you* would; but the others don't. She thinks I don't either, but—— God bless her! It isn't what she does so much as what she *is* that's such a help. Here am I, a wreck. At my best I was n't anything to make a fuss over; and she's the prettiest creature that ever walked on God's earth; and of course she likes to be admired and all that; and yet I can trust her out of my sight, and never feel a second's anxiety. Just imagine what a difference that makes to me! I think she's—well, you would laugh if you knew what I think of her."

He went on like that for an hour, and I listened to him. Then I gave him my arm to his room. I heard her moan as he opened the door.

The next morning she did not care to walk, and I sat and talked to them. Just before lunch I invited her to come for a drive in the afternoon.

"I won't ask your husband to trust you with me," I said, "because he'd trust you with anybody."

"Of course," he said; "but I'd rather trust Baby"—that was his name for her—"to you, because you'll take care of her; and she'd rather be trusted to you than anybody else, would n't you, Baby?"

"Yes," she agreed. "Thank you, Mr. Mordaunt."

We looked at each other for a moment. Her eyes said more than I could interpret; but one thing was clear: she knew that I wanted to keep her from the studio.

After lunch I waited for her. We walked out of view from the hotel without speaking. Then she stopped.

"I understand," she said quietly; "but—I can be trusted with —any one. Won't you trust me?"

I stared at her. She was very pale. I think I was.

"I have an idea of you," I said; "an idea that is worth something to a lonely man. Won't you trust *me,* little lady?" She did

not answer. "It is worth—more than you know—that idea. Don't go."

"I must," she said. Her eyes glittered with tears.

She went.

Well, I would not make matters worse for her and for her poor husband. I waited about to take her back, so that the good seventeen should not know that she had left me. It was nearly two hours before she came. Her face was white—like a sheet. She tried to smile; and sobbed without any tears. Her eyelids were red. When I looked at her she flinched; and she walked unsteadily. I got a cab and drove her about for half an hour, till she was composed. We did n't speak all the time. When we reached the hotel she brushed her hair off her forehead, and drew herself up, and smiled, and walked up the path in her pretty, defiant way. I stopped behind to pay the driver; and I heard her gay little laugh as she walked up to her husband.

"I *nearly* ran away with Mr. Mordaunt," she cried. "He was so nice!" She laughed again.

The laugh scared me. I went up to my room, and—I don't know if I am responsible for the rest of it, but I hope so. I thought at the time that I had gone mad. Anyhow I took out my old revolver and loaded it and went off to Renti's.

His house stood just out of the town—a tall old house, tumbled over with flowering creepers. The doorway was open, and none of the servants were about. I walked up the stairs, and met no one. It was a marble staircase, with a plush-covered rail. It is queer how one remembers those little things. The marble had a grain in it like wheat-sheaves. I recollect that, even. The studio was at the top, as I had guessed from the big windows, with the jalousies thrown open. The door was ajar, and I looked in. He was standing gloating over a picture on an easel—"*The Martyr. Guido Renti.*" The picture of the year! Oh, merciful God!

The face was n't veiled then. It was my little butterfly's face, drawn with pain and terror. There was a real stake for his model; and real ropes to tie her; and a real saffron gown; and—— No; I won't. Pass me the whiskey, old man. Curse him! She had done it to keep her dying husband a little longer in the southern air; and they thought her a butterfly—only wings—— Old man, if there are winged angels—and if there are n't, God help us!

I went in quietly. He did not see me till I was just on him. Then he turned. He was a big man, and a strong man; but he felt like putty when I got hold of him. I lashed him with the knotted whip that lay beside the stake, till it tore his clothes; and throttled his cries. I meant to go on till I killed him; but in all my ungovernable rage—when my blood was boiling with it, and my heart stone

cold—my mind went on thinking quietly, as if it belonged to some one else. It arrived at a calm conclusion: that if I killed him I should only bring more suffering upon her.

In the first place, my mind reasoned, she was fond of me, as a child is fond of its father. It would trouble her if I came to be hanged; and I could n't help her any more then. Secondly, people would say that I did it because I was her lover; and her husband would hear, and it would hurt him, though he would believe her when she told him that I had never said a word of love to her. In the third place, the story of her martyrdom would be published to the world; and that would kill her husband. So after a time I ceased striking the cur, and dragged him to the picture.

"Paint out the face," I commanded, "and paint in another."

If he did that, I thought, he could not tell the story, as he could if I destroyed it.

"No," he groaned. "It 's my masterpiece. I will die first."

I thrashed him again, and he grovelled before me and begged for mercy; but he would not do what I ordered. It was the work of his life, he protested; and he had hurt her no more than was necessary; and he had treated her respectfully—"most respectfully"; and he had paid her well. I was very near killing him then.

I made a bargain with him at last. He was to paint a veil over the face, so that no one could recognize her. I stood behind him with the whip and the revolver while he painted it. His body trembled, and he swayed on his feet, but his hand was steady. That was when I noticed his splendid white hands. My little butterfly's agonized face was covered piece by piece; the big, frightened eyes, the parted mouth, the—all of her. And the veil grew. It is a wonderful piece of painting, that veil, is n't it?

The light lasted just long enough. He was jabbering like an idiot at the finish. I flung him on the floor, and left him there. They took him away to an asylum a few days afterwards. I think the magistrate—I forget his Spanish title—*alcalde* or something—guessed a little of the story. He was very courteous when he met me, and bowed and shook hands. Honorable men, he said, with a steely look in his old eyes, were all of one nation. If he was right—and I think he was—it is a nation that includes many Spanish gentlemen; and a nation that can hold the tongue! He held his, anyhow; and I held mine.

Every one had finished dinner when I reached the hotel. I had mine alone; sat over it, and smoked a cigar. Then I strolled out into the garden and took my usual chair beside the butterfly and her husband. It was a dark, moonless night, and one could scarcely distinguish the sea. There was a vague little vessel, with a mast-head

light, rocking gently at her moorings, that seemed to fix my eyes. Sometimes I see it now; and hear my butterfly girl breathing tremulously at my side.

When we had been silent for a long time, her hand touched my arm pleadingly. I pressed it gently and steadily—the only time. Presently her husband sighed, and spoke. He felt weak, he said—weak!

"My dear fellow," I remarked, in my every-day voice, "Algeciras is too relaxing for you, now the hot weather is beginning. You must go to Switzerland for the summer; and in the autumn to the Pincara; and in the winter you can come back here again."

He laughed a hollow laugh, like a cough.

"We're going back to England next week," he announced; and I saw that the butterfly was crying.

"Ah!" I said. "I see. It's a matter of money, eh?"

"A matter of money," he agreed. "You see, we had only a few hundred pounds, and—it's gone. In fact, I can't think how Baby's made it last so long. We've had six weeks more than I expected. Still, I'm a lot better, you know, Baby dear."

"Ever so much better," she declared. Her voice shook, and she leaned her head on his shoulder undisguisedly. It was plain enough now that she loved him.

"Anyhow"—he looked down at her affectionately—"we've had a good time together, Baby; and perhaps Providence—— I don't believe there is a Providence." There was a sick man's sudden querulous anger in his voice.

"Hush, dear!" She put her arm round him.

"Hush!" I said. "I won't answer for Providence, but there is—an older man—a much older man—who loves both of you. I will send you to Switzerland, my dear boy and girl!"

He sat up quickly and held out his hand.

"God bless you!" he said. "It is—like you, you know"—they had an exaggerated idea of me, I fear. "I—I can't take it, of course, but——" He paused; and my butterfly girl put her hand over his mouth.

"*I* can take it!" she cried. "Be quiet, Jack, I will! Why"—she laughed softly—"I am proud to take it—for *you*. And"—she took my hand quickly and raised it to her lips—"from *you!*"

I sent them off from Algeciras the next day in a special invalid carriage. After we had put him in, I walked the platform with her. She was n't her butterfly self—unless you can imagine a soft, tearful little butterfly.

"There is only one thing that worries me," she said, clinging to my arm, "and that is leaving you."

"There 's one other worry?" I suggested. "Is n't there, little—martyr?"

She looked at me breathlessly.

"You—know?" she said.

"Yes, dear; I know. God will reward you."

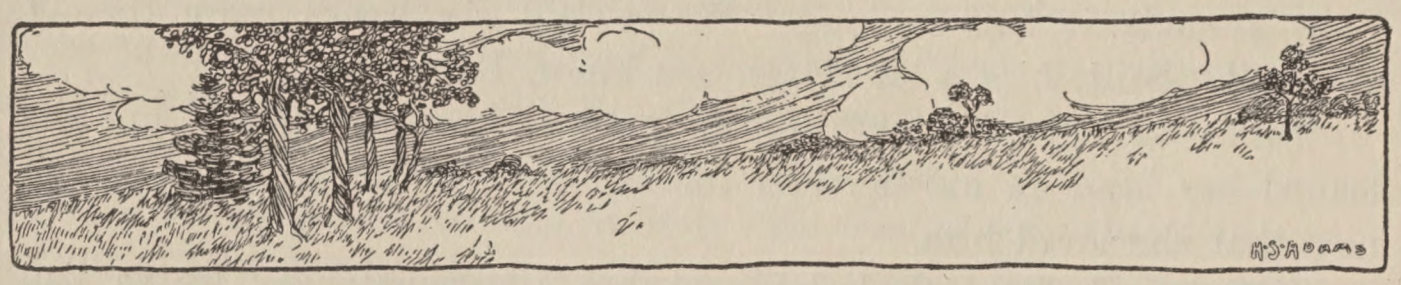
"He has!" she declared. "He has sent you! And everything is right except—if Jack should ever see the picture!"

"He will never see *you* in it," I assured her. "No one ever will. A veil has been painted over the face. I stood there while he painted it. Do you understand that?"

She clasped both her hands over my arm.

"Dearest friend!" she said. "I understand that, and more. All my life I shall love you, *nearly* as much as Jack."

I used to wonder, if he did n't get better—— Well, he did get better. You have known me a long time. Can you believe that I am glad?



OCTOBER WOOINGS

BY ALICE E. ALLEN

THE blackberry bush is a sad coquette;
Behold how she blushes—the tease—
Blushes wine-red at the sun's kiss, yet
Trembles with vague, half-real regret
At the passing of the breeze.

The warm south wind is the milkweed's lover;
In her turret tall and slim,
She waits for his whisper—happy rover—
She is willing to fly the whole world over
If only she goes with him.

Alone through the golden noon we rove,
Swift birds in the branches dart,
There 's joy untold in the maple grove,
All the winsome wild things are in love—
Is any one else, Dear Heart?

FAT FALLON

By Alfred Damon Runyon

"ALL soldiers go to heaven when they die," said Private Hanks as he sat on the steps of one of the barrack halls out at Fort Logan, carefully fishing what he called the "makings" of a cigarette from his blouse pocket. "I bases that opinion on my own dope," he continued. "I got it figured out that the Lord wants people in Heaven who appreciate their surroundings, and after the army a soldier is sure able to do that.

"There 's one man I 'd like to meet up there. He 's down in Arizona now, commanding a penny-ante post on the desert, and I don't suppose he 's got much show of getting to heaven from there; but if he does I 'd like to be on the reception committee to meet him and say: 'Come in, Fat; here 's a harp and some wings, and the gang 's all here waiting for you.'

"Flash Fat Fallon 's the man I mean—the whitest white man I ever knew. I take off my hat to Fat, and so does every one that ever soldiered with him. He 's a captain now, and I hope he 'll live to command the army.

"Fat commanded B troop back in them days when the war business was doing well over in the islands. That was before we led with our jack and caught Mr. Aguinaldo's ace, and when everybody worked but Otis.

"We had one squadron of cavalry there to about ten thousand infantry and artillery, and that one squadron gave the finest imitation of one man being two different places at the same time you ever saw. We were out ahead of every flying column; we did a little rear-guard duty for provision trains; a little outpost duty; a little reconnoitring duty; a little barrack duty, and a little everything else that nobody else could do.

"Say, I went into B troop weighing about one hundred and fifty pounds, and as soft as mush. I came out weighing one hundred and twenty-eight, but I was like cold steel all the way through. I was so tough my face hurt me. We had them little native horses for mounts; and you got so strong that you 'd get off and carry your horse once in a while, to give it a rest.

"Flash Fat was a lieutenant then, just from the Point, and nothing

but a big, good-natured kid. He was the only officer we had with the troop, and he was all the same private out in the field. He slept with us and ate with us and joshed with us and belonged to the family generally. I 'm telling you right when I say Fat used to go out and stand outpost in his turn just like the rest of us. The troop always worked separate from the rest of the squadron; in fact, the whole squadron was n't together for over a year.

" Flash got the name of Fat when he was a kid and used to be that way. We tied the ' Flash ' on him just to be doing. He was a kid always, and I 'll bet if you dropped in on him down there in Arizona right now you 'd find him out playing ball with the gang, or up to some other stunt like that.

" When we was in barracks in Manila, before the gugu blow-off, Fat was captain of our ball team and played catcher. We led the Eighth Army Corps league, too.

" I 've seen that bunch of huskies playing ' run, sheep, run,' ' duck on rock,' ' old sow,' and things like that, with Fat right in with them, busier than a man with four hundred dollars and a thirst. If it was too rainy to be outdoors, like as not you could happen in our barracks and find Fat and a crowd playing miggles on the floor of the barracks. They used to act like a bunch of school kids at recess all the time, and at headquarters they called us Fallon's Failings; but they had an all-fired healthy regard for us on the firing line.

" You could n't tell Fat from a private out in the field. He never wore any mark to show any difference, and he was just as ornery looking as the rest of us. He carried a carbine, and was always right where the guns were going off. Fat was one of the few officers I 've seen who ever gave a private credit for doing a little thinking for himself.

" In them days a troop or company commander did n't always wait for orders from headquarters before he made a move. The troops was pretty much scattered, and the officers had to use their own nuts.

" B troop was a rough, tough outfit, recruited in a hurry in Frisco for the war, and Fat did n't have no snap at first. He made his hit with us one day in barracks, when he called down a big stiff named Devaney for something. Devaney got mouthy when he thought Fat was out of hearing and was telling us what he was going to do to Fat when he got out of the service. Fat heard him and steps up, quiet-like, and says:

" ' You need n't wait until you get out, Devaney. If you think you can trim me, come back of the barracks and try it. If you do, I 'll see nothing 's done to you for it.'

" Devaney could n't renig. A big bunch of us heard it, and he could n't sidestep talk like that. He 'd been posing as a fighter ever

since he came into the troop, and he had most of us buffaloed. So he went back of the barracks with Fat, and for some five minutes there was the prettiest scrap I ever see. They was about the same size and heft, but there was n't nothing to it from the minute they put their hands up.

" Devaney never laid a mitt on Fat. He never had a peek-in. Fat stalled him for awhile, just cutting his face to ribbons with jabs, until he got him good and bruised up, and then he put him out cold.

" There was n't any one else in the troop wanted any doings with Fat after that, and Devaney was one of his best friends.

" It was a picnic out in the field with Fat, from one way of looking at it. A hike with us was one long josh. We kidded each other, and we kidded everybody that came along. We went into a fight like it was all a joke, but I 've seen Fat sit down beside a guy that 'd been bumped off and cry like it was his own brother.

" One time in October we was in Manila, resting up for a few days after a hike down Imus way, when we gets orders to take part in an expedition up the lake—Laguna de Bay. They was going to clean out the towns along the lake. B troop was the only part of the cavalry to go along, but there was a lot of doughboys, so we figured we 'd mostly guard wagon trains.

" Fat comes up that night with his eyes bulging out.

" ' Say,' he says, ' we 're not cavalry any more. We 're hoss marines. My orders is to load you on a casco, and we 're to be towed up to the lake by one of the army gunboats.'

" And that 's what happened, all right. We left our horses in Manila and loaded up on one of the big, pot-bellied cascoes that 'd hold a regiment. Then a crazy old side-wheel steamer that they 'd fitted up with a field gun and called a gunboat hitched onto us. They was a bunch of jackies from the Olympia under a lieutenant on the side-wheeler.

" Fat told us that we was to cruise around the lake until the troops attacked a town from the land side, and then we 'd go after 'em from the water side—catch 'em coming and going, you know.

" It was n't bad on the casco, because they was only about sixty of us and they was lots of room, but the idea of cavalrymen being turned into hoss marines give us a pain in the neck.

" We took it like we took everything else, though, as a big josh. Going up to the lake, we had a picnic playing sailors. We 'd stand on top of the casco and hail all the boats that passed, like regular sailors, and I guess we made them jackies on the tow-boat pretty tired.

" Fat knew what town we was to hit first, but his orders was to cruise off and on until we heard sounds of firing from the land side. Laguna de Bay is what you might call a young ocean strayed away

from its ma, and you can do a lot of cruising round without hitting land, if you want to.

"We knew we'd have to monkey around that lake two or three days, anyhow, before the troops got up, so we made ourselves right to home on the casco.

"Away down in the hold some one found a lot of old pumpkins, or squash, that the owners of the casco had left there, but they was n't no good to eat, so we did n't disturb 'em.

"The first night we was out on the lake, just trailing along behind the tow-boat and smoking and talking, Fat says:

"'Fellers, when we get back to Manila again, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to organize a football eleven and play these college dubs in the volunteers. I hear 'em around the English club telling how they used to play back in the States, and they're figuring on organizing elevens when it gets cooler. We skinned 'em playing baseball, and we can skin 'em at football. I used to go some myself at that game when I was at the Point. Anybody know anything about it?'

"Not many did. Some used to play it when they was kids at school, but that was so long ago most of them had forgotten it. But we was for football if Fat said so, and we talked over all kinds of plans before we went to sleep.

"'Say, loot,' says big Peterson, 'ain't that the game where they has yells?'

"'Sure,' says Fat. 'I've been thinking over a lot of hot ones for us, too. We'll have yells, and don't you forget it. Here's one I thought of the other day. It's part Spanish, part Filipino, and part United States:

"'Zooput! Zooput! Masama—
Cosa este, no soledad—
Razzle, dazzle, siss-boom-ah!
B troop! B troop! 'Rah! 'Rah! 'Rah!'

"Fat had a voice like an army mule braying, and it was n't no manner of music that came from his throat when he turned it loose; but it sounded good to us. The jackies on the tow thought we was bugs for true. You could n't see land on either side, you see, so there was n't no danger of the enemy hearing us.

"'Here's a good one, loot,' says Corporal Benson, who was quite a poet, but all right at that:

"'Doughboys, doughboys,
Haw! Haw! Haw!
Cavalry 'll eat 'em
Raw! Raw! Raw!'

"'Fine,' says Fat. 'Let 's all practise them two.'

"And with him leading us, we sat on top of that casco just churning up the water with them yells. The jackies on the tow had the field gun trained on us in case we started to board 'em. We kept it up until we was all hoarse, Fat and Benson making up new yells until we had about a dozen.

"Next morning the blamedest storm come up, and in about ten minutes we was shy a tow. The rope busted, and the side-wheeler went chasing off by itself, leaving us limping along by our lonely.

"They was n't no danger. That old casco would n't founder and it could n't tip over, so we did n't care a whoop. When I woke up I heard the fiercest sort of a racket on top of the casco, and I could make out Fat's voice. He was hollering:

"'Lower away the capting's gig!'

"'Port your helm, Mister Johnson.'

"'Ladies first in the life-boats.'

"'Toss me some light preserves.'

"And a lot more like that. When I lamps on top to see what was going on, there was Fat with a half-dozen of the fellows having the time of their lives playing sailors. Fat was standing in the bow of the casco, which was reeling and tossing like it was drunk, and was yelling through his hands at the others, who did n't seem to be doing much of anything except see how reckless they could get climbing over the boat.

"One feller was playing lookout at the stern, and he 'd holler:

"'Breakers ahead, sir!'

"'Where away?' Fat 'd ask.

"'Three sheets in the wind,' says the lookout.

"'Luff, you lubber, luff!' bawls Fat, dancing about on the edge of the bow until I expected him to go heels over tea-kettle into the lake. Then he 'd sing:

"A sailor's life is the life for me!

"Down in the hold some one was bellering:

"Oh, Capting Fat of the Hoss Marines
Fed his soldiers on pork and beans!

A stranger would 've thought he was in the tack house for sure.

"The storm kept up 'most all day, and nary a sign of our tow did we see. Fat decided that we 'd be pirates and prey upon the vessels that come across our path—only none come. We made Private Barnes come through with a white undershirt, the only one in the troop, which he wore because he said the blue shirts scratched him, and we h'isted it for a flag, after tearing out a square in the centre to represent black.

"We had an election of officers, and Fat was made captain and me first mate. Fat called himself Bloody Biscuit, the Loose Character of the Laguna, and I was Jiggering Jasper, the Pie-eyed Pirate of the Peskyhanna. We had Renegade Rube and Three-fingered Jack and Desperate Dave and Gory John; we had Stephen Stubbs, the Squint-eyed Scout, and all the other names you ever read in the yellow-backs. Fat had a christening of the boat. Some one had a bottle of pickles in his haversack, so we busted that over the bow—inside the boat, so the pickles would n't escape—and Fat says:

"'I christen thee the Bum Steer.'

"We ran everything shipshape, too. We 'd talk about 'shivering our timbers' and 'dashing our toplights,' and we 'd jerk our forelocks and say 'Aye, aye,' to each other. If we 'd only had some stray vessels to board, it 'd been great.

"We figured some on making Barnes walk the plank because he kicked about tearing his shirt, but we finally compromised on making him sit in the bow for two hours to represent the figurehead.

"Along toward night the storm goes down, but still we could n't see our tow. We drifted all day, and was in sight of land and going in nearer to it all the time. We had plenty of grub and tobacco to last us a few days, and so we was n't afraid of being lost. When night comes on, we could see the lights of the houses on shore, and Fat decides that we needs some lights 'aloft.'

"'So 's our tow can run into us,' he says.

"Well, we did n't have nothing but candles, and they would n't stay lit without covers. Fat has a great idea.

"'Go down and get them pumpkins and we 'll make jack-o'-lanterns,' he says.

"We did. Every one that had a candle gets a pumpkin and carves a scary-looking devil-head out of it. We h'isted them lanterns on sticks or hung them over the sides, and I 'll bet no such looking craft was ever seen around that whole archipelago.

"Fat was as pleased as a kid with a new toy. 'That 's real piratical now,' he says, and I don't doubt it was.

"We was drifting along slowly about a mile from the shore. Little towns fringed that lake clear around, and we could sometimes hear voices. Every one of the towns was an insurgent stronghold, and some were supposed to be well fortified, which was why they was sending a strong force to take 'em.

"After supper we was all on top of the casco, and Fat started us in to practising them football yells again. No one thought about the noise. We gave them much better than the night before, and when sixty huskies are yelling all together out on the water on a still night it makes some disturbance, I 'm telling you.

"We was having all kinds of fun when some one noticed the lights going out alongshore and mentioned it to Fat.

"'Holy smoke!' he says. 'I forgot all about tipping our hand to the gugus. They'll commence shooting in a minute.'

"But they did n't. It was quiet as the grave, and all we could hear in toward shore was the lapping of the water.

"'Oh, they 're just going to bed,' says Fat, and we started in yelling again. We kept it up until midnight, with a few songs thrown in for good measure. Fat taught us to sing:

"Fifteen men on a dead man's chest!
'Yo, ho! and a bottle of rum!

and that made a big hit with every one. We sung all the old songs we knew, and they listened mighty good to us, too.

"Well, we finally got tired and went to sleep, leaving a couple of guards posted. Fat had all the jack-o'-lanterns thrown overboard, as the candles had burnt out, and there did n't seem no chance of that tow picking us up that night.

"At daybreak next morning we was grounded on shore, having drifted too close in. We was near a good-sized town, but they did n't seem to be no signs of life in it. Fat had a couple of men slip over and take a look at the town, but they said they could n't see a soul. They did n't go in very far, for fear of a trap.

"We was eating breakfast when the old side-wheeler we 'd lost hove in sight, looking pretty battered about the edges, but still afloat. She came in close to us, and the naval lieutenant in command of her bawls out:

"'Where you fellers been?'

"'Looking for you,' says Fat.

"'Well, we been a-looking for you, and so 's a whole brigade of soldiers—looking for your bodies. We was just going to fire guns over the water to raise you,' says the naval man.

"'Where 's the brigade?' asks Fat.

"'Right outside that town, and the old man 's sore as a boil,' the lieutenant says. 'You 'd better go over there and report.'

"'Any gugus in town?' asks Fat.

"'Gugus? I should say not,' says the naval man. 'That 's what the old man 's sore at. They ain't a single enemy nowhere.'

"'By the way,' this lieutenant bawls, as Fat gives us orders to unload, 'you did n't notice anything funny around the lake last night did you?'

"'Nope,' says Fat; 'what do you mean?'

"'Oh, nothing,' says the navy; 'only my sailors are a little super-

stitious, and they 've got an idea they saw a new kind of Flying Dutchman last night.'

"'Must have been smoking hop,' says Fat, and the side-wheeler backs off.

"We falls in on the shore and marches through the town, which was as deserted as if no one ever did live there. They was a lot of swell trenches where they ought to been some enemy, but they was no enemy to be seen.

"About a mile outside of town they was a most inspiring sight. A whole brigade of soldiers was camped out, infantry and field guns and everything else—just laying there doing nothing.

"We created some excitement when we marches up, and old General Hill comes a-tearing across the camp with a bunch of staff officers.

"'Glad to see you, lieutenant,' he bawls at Fat. 'Feared you were lost in the storm. Had a terrible time, I guess?'

"'Awful,' says Fat, not batting an eye. 'Where 's the enemy, sir?'

"The old man looked mad in a minute.

"'You tell us,' he says. 'Here I bring a whole brigade to take towns that your troop alone could invest without any trouble. Not a single insurgent or any one else in sight in any of them. All the natives, peaceful and otherwise, have taken to the hills. I guess they got scared of us, but it 's the most remarkable thing I ever heard of. Men, women, and children—all gone. I was sure I had reliable information that this country was alive with insurgents, but they 've gone, bag and baggage, leaving only their trenches. We 've beaten this whole side of the lake and cannot find any one in the towns. We caught some women who did n't seem able to keep up with the general scramble, but they 're half crazy with fear. All the interpreters can get out of them is some nonsense about a spirit ship that cruised along-shore last night with a lot of screaming devils on board. They say that 's what caused the people to hide out, but of course that 's silly.'

"'Well, what do you think of that?' says Fat to us, after the general had gone.

TRUTHS

For the good of our souls, Suspense and Despair were sent into the world.

Satire does a lot of preaching, but has few converts.

The worst tangles in life are when Golden Warps and Shoddy Woofs—snarl.

It is an excellent thing for Morality that the World has keen ears and sharp eyes.

Minna Thomas Antrim

MODERN FICTION AND MODERN LIFE

By Edward Stratton Holloway

NEVER in the history of our literature has the output been so great as at present, and yet never before has its general average been so high. Even stories of adventure, toward which all seem ready to show a lenient spirit because of the entertainment they provide, are for the most part well written. Our literature is national, both in its manner and its content. Few phases of our varied life are neglected, few of its characteristics unrecorded. We find much that is excellent, much that is cultured, much that—but stop a moment! Is it *lasting?* Will it *live?*

To ask the question is, I fear, to answer it. What to-day seems so ancient as the Right of Ways, what so prehistoric as the To Have and To Holds? On the other hand, pick up a volume of Balzac: it rings as "modern" as if freshly issued from the press. Why? It breathes the breath of life. Our own popular novel is a convention.

But no one with the interests of our country and its literature at heart will look at the matter in a spirit of captiousness or of discouragement. Even as our ecclesiastical guides bid us examine our consciences, not that we may despair, but that through a knowledge of our faults we may mend our ways, may rise to greater heights, so will those to whom our novels and our magazines prove a disappointment seek to ascertain and point out the cause.

Does the man at my elbow remark just here: "Surely it requires no inquisition to discover the difficulty! Our writers provide our literature; let them amend *their* ways?" Before we indulge in condemnation of any class, it is well to look into the conditions under which it works; that is but fair—and Americans, with all their haste of judgment, are honest.

If we sought for one word to describe the age in which we live, I think that word would be found to be "temporary." The ancients built for perpetuity—not only literally but in figure. As for ourselves—I recall a beautiful building erected six years ago, in which, on entering one morning recently, I found the plaster lying in hummocks on the floor. The joints in the woodwork of dark oak gape an eighth of an

inch wide. God's daylight shines through. Our forefathers saved their substance, built and dwelt in houses. We flit from apartment to seashore, mountains, or country, and back to another apartment; so that if an address be six months old the likelihood of finding him we seek is uncertain indeed. What wonder if the lifetime of the current novel is likewise of but a few months? Our literature is sold like buttons, and mostly at department stores; if any of the stack remains beyond the immediate call, it is "closed out at forty-five cents per volume." The incentive toward serious work is not great: it is not surprising that the passion for perfection is possessed by but few!

And our readers. An acquaintance said to me: "Give me a book to read. I'm going to Chicago on the Limited. Now, don't give me anything sad: I've got troubles of my own. I want something amusing."

Are our writers who supply the current demand, then, solely the criminal class, as you imagined? The real criminal—or, at least, the accessory before the fact—is our great, good-natured, hurried, thoughtless American public—an animal which would think if it had the time—for it is a keen-witted animal—but which at present rushes forward, its eyes bent upon its own material prosperity. Material prosperity is desirable, but is it well always to forget (though shoulders shrug impatiently at such old-fashioned notions) that beyond this there lies another world, and that even in this one, man has a soul and an intellect as well as a body to be fed?

To return, then, the author of to-day simply serves his public; and as Poppy St. John with her wayward acumen remarks: "The public is master."

Precisely. *Which* public?

Which master will you serve, O writer? For you have to choose.

There is the public of which I have spoken—that which we see at the vaudeville show, the ball-game; a community of good fellows, attractive women. Let us not undervalue it—nor overvalue it.

There is another public, cultured, intellectual, always awake to that which is good. And, like that to which Lot fled, "it is a *little* city." Which will you have?

To be sure, it has always seemed to me within the realms of possibility that a story might be written, so powerful, so human, so entrancing in its interest, that for the sake of that story the great American public might forget and forgive its thought and its style; but that requires genius, and few there be that possess it.

There are, however, many capable of producing excellent and dura-

ble work—if they would use their abilities. Of *them* again I ask: Which will you choose?

If for a moment such close their eyes to the glamour of a hundred-thousand sale, of popular success, of possible wealth, there may appear before them that well-nigh forgotten beckoner—an Ideal for their following: and that Ideal not intangible, not phantasmagorical, but Life itself—Depth of Life, Truth to Life, the Beauty of Life. Let us take up together, but for a moment, each of these three.

As we have been reminded, "the mere transcript of facts is not life, is not art." Mr. George Moore puts this tersely when he says: "It is a vain and fruitless task to narrate any fact unless it has been tempered and purified in thought and stamped by thought with a specific value."

I have mentioned the portrayal in our fiction of our national and our individual life. Will any one add that its inner meaning, its esoteric spirit, has been so caught, fixed, stamped for all time, that an attempt to repeat the work would be superfluous, would be literary effrontery? Yet such things have been done in the past, will be done again. So I say: If they are to be done in this our day, our writers must learn to speak from a greater *depth* of life. That they do not now so speak is largely due to their own attitude toward literature, the attitude of which I have written. "That," said Whistler, "looks like the work of a man who considers sketching a pleasant morning's amusement." For years Degas has shut himself away from the world that he may paint. Few of us would advocate the kicking down-stairs of friends who call at an inopportune hour, as it is rumored Degas has done before to-day, but few, also, would deem it necessary to advise their literary friends against such forcible courses.

❦

When literature is regarded as something more than a polite profession, as something deeper than a method of providing bread and cheese, or villas in Italy and automobiles, we shall run less risk of finding the advertising pages of our magazines more interesting than those for which their editors pay so much per word.

But even sincerity of purpose, a sense of the dignity of his work, will not alone create a writer; "grind" sometimes makes for dulness. Balzac's eighteen hours a day did not alone make—Balzac.

Let us go back to that phrase—it seems as if one *must* continually quote George Moore if he speaks justly of literature—that phrase of his, "depth of life." It is akin to, but better than, Matthew Arnold's "criticism of life," for criticism will still be carping—as witness the present article. As a gloss may I add the dictum, in homely words,

that literature must be written not from the outside down, but from the inside up?

How is it to be accomplished? How shall one reach the soul of things and express that soul by the inevitable word? Does n't one wish he knew!—and were able to communicate the gift.

A few principles have, however, been made evident by writers English and American, not, to be sure, by their precepts, but by their perpetrations.

One of the fundamentals in doing great work is the writer's choice of subject, his adoption of a subject "made to his hand." Most authors are known by one or two books. This means that in those books the subject has been *theirs,* that in it they have found inspiration, power. Do you remember De Maupassant's words: "Make me something fine in the form that shall suit you best, according to your temperament?"

It is beside the mark, yet may I inquire just here: How many magazine editors have thought of making a request like this when asking writers for contributions? One of the foremost of American novelists, one who has learned to draw pathos from those depths of life, tells me that he has been importuned by editors for—detective stories!

One of the foremost aids in reaching depth of life is in being *true* to life. "'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." That answer may prove far to seek in these days of conventional literary hypocrisy. One may well beseech—and believe—that in life characters may not often belie themselves as in modern fiction. On Forty-second Street, New York, one evening a horse attached to a wagon in front of a trolley-car *balked.* The motorman calmly turned the crank. The car moved ahead, slowly, more rapidly, at full speed. The horse no longer balked. Had we literary trolleys, we might be spared such endings as Mrs. Humphry Ward gave to "Lady Rose's Daughter," and as—but within the limits of a short article, one can only suggest and pass on.

To gain Truth, to avoid Balking, we must "see straight." And seeing straight involves seeing to the bitter end. To be sure, editors and matinée girls do not like bitter ends, nor did my friend of the Limited. And yet a phrase comes to my mind just now: "Their anxious, joyless faces spoke, moreover, of domestic worries, incessant needs for money, old hopes finally shattered." Of such is Life made, and also, we may remember, of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. These are not all of life, and for it we may reverently thank God, but he who ignores these, he who forgets Sorrow, how shall he tell of Joy!

But serious work on the part of an author does not always imply that

the result shall be serious—in the sense in which the word is commonly used.

We find in life not only joy, which is deep, but brightness, brilliancy, the lightness of girlhood, even its coquetry, its frivolity and love of pleasure. We are surrounded by the charm and buoyancy of healthful youth, the quiet happiness of later years, the humor, the wit of all ages, all circumstances. All these are of life, and they make up much of its beauty.

Beauty—and Beauty comes so near to being the end of Art that sometimes we are tempted to say that Beauty and Art are one.

These must, then, not only not be neglected, but sought.

"Surely they have been sufficiently sought!"—so again speaks the mentor at my elbow. "Much of our modern 'literature' is composed of little else!"

But lightness need not be trivial. The comedies of Master William Shakespeare are not trivial; nor do we find the wit and sparkle of M. Molière or of Master Congreve trivial. Whistler's close study—the arts are cognate, and I cannot forbear illustrating from one art where it will make clear my meaning as regards the other—Whistler's study, his synthesis of life, was no less severe, no less deep, in such lighter, charming subjects as "The Little Blue Bonnet" than in his greatest portraits. They do not *show* the labor; and here is a great lesson—his work never shows it. His brush-work is always limpid, even gay in its lightness, and yet we know that in some cases he required as many as fifty sittings from his subject.

Art is never heavy, and it is not always ethical. Forgive me if I prophesy. Poe will outlive Emerson. Beauty still lives when didacticism lies entombed.

❦

But, before I pass on, beauty does not imply dilettanteism. There is a culture in America; why does it so often manifest itself in clever, pretty trifling! "Are you a Bromide?" Then thank Heaven that you are! Modern cleverness, such as it is, has become a burden upon the soul.

But, having thought of the substance of literature—its content—we should not forget its expression.

Is it necessary to say that one should write individually? All art is life, nature, beauty, seen, translated, transmuted by the artist's own intellectuality, and expressed by him according to his own temperament.

One might put in a plea for the larger utterance. Shakespeare had it—as he had everything. Sir Thomas Browne had it, and good Jeremy Taylor. It is in the English Bible, and Milton, and Shelley. Just

now "a glory has departed from the earth." Perhaps it is as well. The larger utterance demands great thought for utterance.

When we penetrate life we shall have thought.

"But," says the man at my other elbow, "you have preached of Life. If it is anything, surely our literature is lifelike." Ah, "there you are!" The gentleman-like man—did you ever think of it?—is never quite the gentleman. The "lifelike" story lacks the touch, the personal thrill of life itself.

"But," again says one, "we cannot depict all of Life, we can scarcely undertake an American Comédie Humaine!" Then let us remember Tourgénieff. He wrote five short novels, some stories and "Sportsman's Sketches," and yes—ah, yes!—a few "Dream Tales." That is all. Fifteen little books as against Balzac's big forty. Yet which name will live the longer? Who shall say? Tourgénieff is more beautiful than Balzac—and art is beauty. Balzac is more universal than Tourgénieff—and art is universal. To repeat the expression of the American writer whose work bids fair to outlast that of his contemporaries, "And there you are!"

But Tourgénieff is not greatly read in America; nor perhaps is Mr. James himself. Quite so. It is well to see straight here also. If you *think*—well, yes, as intimated very early in this article, there may be the bread and cheese, but hardly the villa in Italy, perchance not the automobile. And yet I am not sure! It is well to remember still that the battle is to those who *dare*.

OCTOBER

BY THOMAS S. JONES, JR.

AMID a mass of golden-rod she grieves,
Her raven hair entwined with marigold,
While in her lap lie colors manifold
Of which a crimson crown she idly weaves;
And I have seen her stray among the sheaves
When first the uplands were in yellow stoled,
Or deep within the fastness of the wold,
Her light feet tripping through the fallen leaves.

Her face is wan and drawn from wandering,
Her russet gown is rent by branch and brier,
While in her eyes there burns a sullen fire
Like that of some half-wild and hunted thing;
Yet oft at night, beneath the cloudy moon,
She wakes the echoes with a witching croon!

THE SWAN SONG

BY GEORGE L. KNAPP

WHEN Philip Waters, attorney at law, first hung up his shingle in the town of his choice, he had a rather varied list of belongings. First, of course, came his diploma; beginning with "*Quoniam*.....*ingenio et moribus bonis,*" and ending with a group of signatures that looked like the map of a battle-field in the Alps. Next came his license to practise, granted by the august favor of the supreme court. And then followed, in any order you like, his desk, chairs, law books (not very many), a picture of Lohengrin, a receipt for a month's rent, and two hundred and sixty dollars and fifty cents in cash. Three years later he owned the diploma, license, books, and picture, an unreceipted bill for a month's rent, a lively recollection of his name at the bottom of certain promises to pay, and a cash balance of perhaps thirty cents. So it was reasonably plain that some one was intercepting his share of the national prosperity. The loss of a few hundred dollars may seem a little thing to you, but I want to tell you—and I speak as one having authority—that there is more difference between two hundred dollars *plus* and the same amount *minus* than there is between any two sums whatsoever on the right side of the ledger.

The trouble was, he was out of his element. A man who thinks music and dreams music ought to practise music; especially when he has a voice which can sing the tenor part of the "Stabat Mater" without even a quaver on that high D flat. But that was n't the worst of the incongruity. Phil was an idealist. He was a throw-back to the age of revolutions; the age when youth went out with a musket on its shoulder and a proclamation in its hand, to reform the universe. He came by this honestly. In the first place, he was an only child,

and grew up among grown-ups; which is bad for one's sense of proportion. His mother had a world of sunny practical sense, but she came of a stock not given to counting the cost of having its own way, or to setting profit above principle; and the boy inherited her nature rather than learned her maxims. His father was an army officer, who when Phil was three years old was shot, hacked, frozen, and otherwise unkindly treated on one of the Sioux campaigns, and retired on a wheel-chair and a pension, to live henceforth in dreams of his own past and his son's future. So you see the kind of stock the lad came from and the training he had. At college the boys called him "Sissy" at first; but when he licked two sophomores seriatim, and two more at once, that seemed inappropriate. Then they called him "Sir Galahad" and "King Arthur," and gave detailed reasons why they preferred the rôle of Lancelot, themselves. Finally, by a sort of natural selection, they settled on "Lohengrin," the stainless knight whose Swan Song Phil was so often singing. But any of these nicknames tell you the sort of boy he was; and he brought all his fine sentiments and high ideals to the place on earth that cared the very least about them.

It was a Western manufacturing town, peopled largely by the imported cheap labor of Central and Southern Europe; with just enough Americans to boss the jobs, and just enough Irish to hold down the police force. It was owned, soul, body, and courts—especially courts—by three or four corporations, who sometimes quarrelled among themselves, but always presented a solid front to the general public. Each of these corporations kept a pack of trained lawyers, just as a rice planter of the old days kept a pack of trained bloodhounds; and for much the same reason. Then there were some lawyers who had a practice dating from the earlier days of the town; a number who picked up a living out of politics and chance cases; a couple who made a go of criminal practice; and a few who waited around for the jobs that were too dirty for the regular servants of the ruling corporations. Outside of these employments, a young attorney had about as much chance of getting business as a snowball has of remaining unmelted in the winter resort of the Prince of the Powers of the Air.

"I don't like to discourage you," said a friend one day, about three months after Phil's arrival. "But you 'll never make a go of it here; and if you 'll take a fool's advice, you 'll get out."

"Why?" asked Phil. "Seems to me there ought to be plenty of work here."

"I don't think there 's much law business," said the friend. "And if there was, you are n't the man to get it."

"Why?" asked Phil again.

"You won't bluff and bluster and stoop to shyster tricks," said the other. "And that 's what the people here want, except a very few;

and they 've got their lawyers, long ago. This is a rag-time town, and you want to sing grand opera. It won't work."

"But the courts are n't rag-time," protested Phil.

"They 're not, eh?" said his friend. "Wait till you 've been here a couple of years, and tell me what you think of the courts then. Wait till you come into court with a case against a corporation, and have Mason tell you to sit down and shut up. That man belongs to the corporations of this town as much as their own workmen do. You wait."

He waited. Also he got a few cases. The devil is too old a fisherman to think of catching even suckers without bait. Phil sang in the choir of his church, and the high men thereof, who had a corner on most of the banking business of the town, concluded to keep him on the string for a time; he might come in handy some day, you know, if he proved reasonable. So they gave him a little work to do—just enough to make him hungry for more. Then he got in as assistant counsel in a few cases; and did a little collecting; or, rather, tried to do it. If you have ever lived in a manufacturing town where the average wage is a dollar and a half per day, you will appreciate the distinction. At last a piece of real luck came his way. Billy Burke was one of the Democratic leaders of the town, and, being such, he kept a saloon. The city council was Republican that year, and the clique in control tried to hold up the genial Billy for a round sum besides his license. Burke refused to be bled—that way—and by some strange chance engaged Phil to defend him. When Phil succeeded he made a warm friend as well as a good fee.

It was perhaps six months later that Burke came to Phil's office with a scheme. A paving contract had been let, the work was under way, and Burke had found a flaw in the manner of advertising the bids. It might or might not invalidate the contract—Phil thought it would not; but a suit would certainly stop work and put the company to heavy expense. Now, the chief owners of the paving company were the leading bankers of the town—old enemies of Burke, who deemed this his chance to get even. So he brought his case to Phil, who listened with a blank face.

"I don't quite see what you want, Mr. Burke," he said. "This is an error, but I don't think it would affect the contract. And certainly you can't collect damages."

"Don't expect to," said Burke. "That ain't the game at all. Look here, young feller, you 're rather green. Can't you see they 'll pay a good price to keep from being tied up just now? That 's what I 'm after—the money. Bring that suit, and they 'll be on their knees to us inside of twenty-four hours. And I 'll give you a third, just as I said."

"I see," said Phil. "Yes, I am rather green. You will have to take your business elsewhere, Mr. Burke."

"What?" said the boss of the Third.

"I 'm not in the blackmailing business," said Phil. "This is just a hold-up."

"S'pose it is?" said Burke. "Don't they hold others up every day? Did n't they spend ten thousand dollars in the council to get this job, and ain't that a hold-up? That 's just the point. They 've made a misplay, and we 're next. It 's up to them to pay forfeit."

"Even if they 're as bad as you say, that does n't justify us in robbing them," said Phil. "I can't take your case, Mr. Burke."

"Well, I 'll be hanged!" said Burke; and tramped heavily out.

Three hours later he was back, standing in a hesitating attitude at the door. "May I come in?" he asked timidly.

"Certainly," said Phil. "What 's the matter?"

"Won't I dirty your carpet?" asked Burke, still timidly.

"Not if your feet are clean," said Phil curtly.

"Nor ooze corruption out onto the furniture? Nor soil the atmosphere with my tainted breath? 'Cause I know I 'm a vile blackmailer, but I don't want to seduce no innocent youth."

"There 's no danger of that while you 're here," said Phil. He did not think how theatrical it would sound until he had said it, and then he scorned to qualify. Burke came further into the room, and spoke in his natural voice.

"You 're right there, young feller. And do you know why? 'Cause I ain't got no time to waste on a blamed fool, that 's why. You done me a good turn once, an' I thanked you an' paid you for it, see? Then I try to do you a good turn, just to be friendly, an' you go to making cracks about blackmail. If you ever get over that preaching conscience of yours, come around, an' you 'll find me as friendly as ever. If you don't—why, we 'll just call it quits."

He was gone; and Phil stood gripping a chair until his knuckles were white, and wondering why he felt almost as much humiliated as angry.

The suit was brought, and bought off, just as Burke had planned. Phil wondered whether the officials of the plundered company knew that he had refused to share in their spoil. He was not long in doubt.

"I am told you refused to take Burke's case against us," said Mr. Teague, banker and president of the paving company.

"Yes," said Phil. "It was blackmail, and I am not in that kind of business."

"Why did n't you stop it, then?" asked the banker crossly.

"Stop it? How?" said Phil.

"Why, you could have taken that case and drawn a defective com-

plaint. That would have let us know what was going on, and we could probably have beaten the scheme altogether. You ought to think of these things." He went into the bank. Phil rubbed his eyes and wondered if he were awake; and if he had really heard this respected banker and church member condemn a man for *not* being guilty of professional treason.

"You can't sing grand opera to an audience that wants rag-time." Phil went to see the friend who had made that remark, and told him this new development. The friend laughed.

"It 's mean to say, 'I told you so,'" he said.

"But how does this square with your theory that the courts are in the pay of the corporations?" asked Phil.

"Oh, I reckon the paving company has n't come up with its assessment," said the friend. "Or maybe Burke took some of the gang into the deal. Perhaps you 'll find out some day. You 're learning."

He was. But the tuition was higher than he could really afford. His little capital was spent, and he seemed no nearer a practice than at the beginning. He had borrowed money, and when the note came due he had to borrow to meet it; so he made the loan a little bigger, to cover some bills that were pressing him. He was well started on the road of a hundred curses.

Often and often Phil was tempted to cut the whole business and leave the town. He knew he could make a good living in music, and common sense told him he had no chance where he was. But outmastering the prudent counsels of common sense rose the stubborn pride which seems to dwell in the least drop of Saxon blood; and he set his teeth and turned to the fight anew. He knew, too, how his father would feel if he yielded; and more than once he swore that, come what might afterwards, he would stick it out while his father lived. From the home letters, that did not seem likely to be long.

And then came *the* case.

It was an important case, too. There had been a gathering of the members of a great secret order in the capital of the state; and, of course, a host of round-trip tickets had been sold in Eastern offices. The ticket brokers, sharks and decent traders alike, had seen visions of much profit, and had bought all the tickets offered for sale. And now, when they were loaded up with this particularly perishable merchandise, Judge Mason issued a blanket injunction, forbidding throughout the state all traffic in tickets whatsoever. There were hurrying to and fro among the brokers, and burning of midnight gas among the lawyers, against the day when the injunction should be made permanent or dissolved. The brokers' association had attorneys engaged in the capital, but the chief broker in Phil's town, Baldwin

by name, was a friend and client of Phil's, so, naturally, he was engaged as assistant counsel. He found himself the only cheerful one on the case.

"It's like this," said the senior counsel, one day when they were consulting on ways and means. "The only time Mason ever let a corporation get the worst of it in his court was when he was drunk; and when he got sober he fined the other attorney for contempt of court, because he took advantage of the weakness of a gentleman. And, more than that, he's got it in for me, personally. Our only chance is to get a change of venue."

"And that's just what you won't get," said Baldwin. "I can see our finish right now. Well, go ahead; I prefer to die fighting."

They went ahead. Phil prepared his part of the case with unusual care. One of his friends—the one who spoke of grand opera and rag-time—saw his light one night after the theatre was out, and dropped in. Phil explained.

"You're wasting your time," said the friend.

"Why?" asked Phil.

"Don't you work for the men who hire you?" asked the friend.

"Certainly," said Phil.

"So does Mason," was the retort. "And that's the railroads, this trip. They've given their orders, and it's up to him to deliver the goods. You've got a good argument there, but you'll never get a chance to make it."

Phil did not quite believe this, but he was gloomy. And the morning of the hearing he got a telegram, saying that his father was sinking, and asking him to come home at once. When the message came Phil had just eighty-five cents in his possession. He went out, mortgaged his books and furniture, borrowed twenty dollars from his doubting friend, and wired that he would start that night. Then he went to the court-house. The senior counsel for the brokers drew him aside.

"I'm going to let you do the speaking on the main question," he said. "That is, if you don't object. He's liable to give it to you raw."

"I'll do it, of course," said Phil. "But why don't you speak?"

"I'll try to get the change of venue," said the senior counsel.

It ended in trying, and that quickly. The judge simply shut off all argument, joked with the counsel for the railroads, growled at the counsel for the brokers, and rushed the thing along at lightning speed. When it came time to speak on the main question the senior counsel rose again. "My young friend and co-counsel is prepared on this matter," he said, indicating Phil with a wave of his hand. "He will present our side of the case."

"Urrrumph!" said the judge. He swung round in his swivel chair and put his feet on the window-sill, affording the attorneys a three-quarter view of the back of his left ear. The younger of the railroad attorneys grinned broadly; the elder scowled and shook his head. Phil flushed, but began speaking. In two minutes the court interrupted him.

"There are no authorities for the position you take," he said.

"I have the authorities here, your honor," said Phil. "Allow me——"

"Where 's one of them?" It is impossible to exaggerate the brutal insolence of the demand. A Roman master, the morning after a banquet with Lucullus, might have spoken thus to a clumsy slave.

"Federal cases——"

"Not in point!"

Phil started to speak, but the judge wheeled round and addressed him:

"I 'm surprised, Mr. Waters, that you should take up the time of the court with such arguments. They have nothing to do with the case at bar. If you don't know better, I 'm sorry for your clients." He turned his back again and replaced his feet on the window-sill.

"May it please your honor, I did not come here to be made a laughing-stock by this court." Phil was trying hard to speak calmly, but his wrath was fast overcoming him. "I have prepared my case carefully, and am fortified with authorities, if I can get a chance to read them——"

"There are no authorities for the position you take!" repeated the court.

Phil paused a moment, and when he spoke his voice was silky. "If your honor means to plead in this case, I should like a look at your brief," he said.

The court faced to the front with a clatter of heels and a squeak of protesting swivel. "This injunction is made permanent!" he thundered. "And you are fined a hundred dollars for contempt of court!" he roared at Phil. "Pay up or go to jail!"

"I plead the statute of limitations, your honor!" said Phil, his lips white and his nostrils twitching. "I have held this kind of a court in contempt for more than six years, and, please God, I shall continue so to hold it!" The bailiff was thumping the floor with his staff, the judge was bellowing, and some unseen person in the audience was clapping loudly; but the shrill insistence of that tenor voice dominated the room. "I hold this court in the contempt which honest men have reserved for thieves, and straightforward men for cowards, since there were cowards and thieves. I hold this court in contempt, even as the corporations, whose servant it is and whose decrees it regis-

ters, hold it in contempt. I have not the money to pay this fine. The court has the power to put me in jail, and will doubtless take pleasure in exercising that power. But the court has no power to lessen my supreme contempt for the judge who steals the livery of the law to do work that should turn the stomach of a sneak thief. I had hoped to start to-night for the bedside of my dying father; but I would rather lie in jail than enter his presence soiled with the filth of this court—as I would be soiled if I were silent under its tyranny. I well know that he would rather never see his son again than think he had begotten a cur who dared not resent the insults which this court heaps on law and justice and common decency."

Phil had a vague memory of the bailiff laying a hand on his arm; of the face of the judge, purple with wrath; of the face of the elder railroad attorney, on which admiration and disgust seemed to mingle. He saw Baldwin rush up to the senior counsel with some proposal; and saw, rather than heard, the syllable "Wait!" that went with the old lawyer's shake of the head. But he remembered nothing clearly until he found himself pacing the floor of his cell, and humming his old friend, the Swan Song. And at first his chief sentiment was one of satisfaction at having the job over. It was hard, terribly hard, to think of his father dying; but he knew that neither father nor mother would have him alter or suppress one word of his defiant challenge. He was conscious of a consuming rage against the judge; but it was less a desire for revenge than a fierce protest against defeat, a frantic wish to try it over on more even terms.

It seemed years before the door opened and admitted a half-dozen of his friends. The sceptical friend was there, and so was Baldwin. Phil expected reproaches, but the ticket broker held out his hand.

"Shake, old man," he said. "I 've lost two thousand dollars, but you gave us a run for our money, any way. Hanged if it was n't worth it to hear you putting the blocks to him!"

"I am very sorry I lost you the case," said Phil.

"Quit it, then," said the senior counsel. "Your speech was the only decent thing in the whole business. Now come along."

"Come along?" Phil looked up in surprise.

"Yes," said Baldwin. "Your fine 's paid, and you 're free. His Nibs was so hot he forgot to add a jail sentence."

They got him to his office, and there they left him, for he was beginning to ask questions. As they went out Baldwin turned.

"I 'm forgetting something," he said. "This was given me to hand to you. I don't know what 's in it, but I reckon it is n't dynamite." He threw a bulky envelope on the desk and went out.

Phil looked at his watch. It was still several hours till train-time. He opened the envelope. A package of letters fell out, and with them

two flashlight photographs. Phil looked at the pictures, sat up straight, and whistled. Then he examined the letters. There were seven of them, part in an unfamiliar feminine hand, and part in the bold scrawl of Judge Mason. There was no word of explanation, and none was needed. The letters told their own story, but the photographs shrieked it aloud.

For more than an hour Phil sat with his elbows on the desk and his chin in his hands, thinking, thinking. Once he stirred to get out his account book and look over the list of his obligations; then he resumed his study. At last he straightened up and began to sing, softly; and then stopped short. For he was singing the song of the stainless knight, who was unspoiled by the world and its dishonor. He looked up at the picture.

"Guess we'll have to part, old fellow," he said. "Good-by," He laid it face downward on the bookcase, and began singing again. But the tune was changed. He was going back to the world-old law of the right of the strongest; and he wanted no music that hinted of duty and sacrifice. That was over; and he turned to something that was just ringing melody, without any particular meaning, except the one you chose to put into it—the waltz-time heroics of the Troubadour of Aliaferria.

"They told me you called me up," said Baldwin, coming in a little later.

"I did," said Phil. "I want a statement of the amount you lost by that decision this morning. Make it out, please." He was sorting letters and throwing the rejected ones into the stove; and as he spoke he emptied another drawerful out upon the cot, and resumed his singing. "'*Ah! che la morte ognora!*'" he sang, and the ring in his voice matched the fighting glint in his eyes.

"Gee whiz!" said Baldwin. "Jail must agree with you."

"It does," said Phil. "Make out that statement, please. '*L' a mour che pose in te!*' I think I can get your money back for you. '*Non te scordar! Non te scordar di me!*' Tell me—no, you need n't. I'll find that out elsewhere. 'Leonora mine!'"—he took refuge in the translation. "'Ah, Leonora, fare thee well!'"

"I don't understand this," said Baldwin.

"Don't try," said Phil.

"But——" said Baldwin.

But the only reply he got was the tearful plaint of the heroine, whistled instead of sung.

Phil finished his destruction of documents by the time he had reached the end of the Miserere. Then he put the package of letters in one pocket, the photographs in another, and his revolver in a third. "Wait here," he said to Baldwin. "And don't be scared."

Judge Mason was in his chambers. He looked up in amazement as Phil entered and locked the door behind him. "What do you mean by coming into my presence?" he demanded roughly.

"Business," said Phil. "Private business, and very important—for you. You are a great jurist, my dear Mason, but that's nothing to your ability as a letter writer. My business has to do with letters."

"What letters?" The question was bold enough, but there was a hint of fear in his eyes.

"This, for one." Phil tossed the epistle across the table. "There are six others, and some pictures."

"Do you mean to blackmail me?" asked the judge hoarsely. "Do—do you know——"

"I do," said Phil, interrupting. "I am a blackmailer, just as you are a ten times perjured hound. But I have the decency to quit the profession I'm disgracing, while you hang onto your job like grim death to a sick nigger. What was the amount of my fine this morning, when you got through increasing it? I seem to forget."

"Five hundred dollars," said the judge. "I'll pay you back."

"You will," said Phil. "Don't try that," he added, as the judge gave a furtive look toward a drawer. "Mine's in my pocket, and I can beat you to it easy. The five hundred, please."

The judge produced a bulging wallet and began counting out the bills. "Humph!" said Phil. "Seems to be railroad pay-day. Thanks. Now, my client, Mr. Baldwin, will lose just two thousand two hundred and thirty dollars by your decision. I'll trouble you for that next."

"I haven't got that much," said the judge.

"No?" said Phil. "Well, I hope for your sake you can get it."

"I decided according to the law," said the judge.

"Of course," said Phil. "But my interest in romantic fiction is somewhat lessened by the fact that my train goes at eight-thirty, and I've several things to do. Hadn't you better get that money?"

"What warrant have I that you will not betray me, after all?" asked the judge.

"None," said Phil. "That is, none but my word, and you're such a liar you won't believe anybody else. It's up to you to play it blind or fight. If you want to fight, say so."

The judge counted out the money. Phil verified it, put it in his pocket, and handed over a bunch of letters. Mason examined them eagerly.

"There are only five here! You said there were six. And the pictures——" His eyes were green as a hunted wolf's.

"You can count, can't you? Yes, most virtuous of judges, there were six—and there are yet. The sixth one and the pictures will stay

with me, in case you should have any inconvenient memory of the numbers of these bills, you know. Good-by." He unlocked the door and backed out.

"Don't ask questions," he said at the office, a little later. "Here 's your money, less the fee. No, I won't take any more. No, he is n't hurt, and I did n't lay hands on him. Here 's a list of bills I wish you would pay, and send me the receipts at my home. I think this is the right amount for them. And here 's the five hundred you fellows subscribed to get me out of jail. You know where it belongs. There are some bills that I can't pay now, but I 'll send the money for them as soon as I can. That 's all."

He gripped Baldwin's hand, ran down the stairs, and turned into the Monarch saloon. Burke was at his desk in front.

"Mr. Burke," said Phil, "I 've come to apologize. I called you a blackmailer some time ago. Well, I 'm one now. You 've got your revenge."

"Did he cough up?" asked Burke eagerly, a grin wrinkling the corners of his mouth.

"So it was you sent me those letters?" said Phil. "Yes, he coughed up. And now good-by. I 'm going to leave the town."

"What?" said Burke. "Not for good?"

"Yes," said Phil.

"But, good Lord, young feller! this is your harvest time," said Burke. "You 've got this town by the tail when it comes to the law business now. Don't you see that he won't dare cross you in anything? You just stay here and make money."

And Phil answered with a new learned patience: "Yes, I must go. Of course he would n't dare to cross me, and for that very reason I could n't try a case before him. And I have no right to practise law any more. I have disgraced it, and I must quit it. But I want to thank you for your friendship. I did n't understand."

And a little later he sat under the low lights of the chair car, with blinking eyes and tightened lips; trying to keep back the tears that blinded and the sobs that choked. For he had turned his back on his own code of honor, and the Swan Song was his no more.

OSLA WHALE HUNTING

BY EDITH RICKERT

THERE was a school of whales come into the lee side of Gulberwick, beyond the island, one day when all the men were off at the haddock-fishing.

Wild spring weather of spray and mist, and Osla Petersdaughter out in the thick of it, tramping the moors because she could not make up her mind to marry Eric Saemundson, or any man in the world! From the time that Eric settled to the wooing of her, she was restless in the house and shirked everything that lay to her hand there, burned her bannocks and tangled her wool and knit up her shawl-patterns criss-cross; and she was forever making reasons for going out in the wild weather. Now she would be fetching in peats from the high hills, though her father's stack would outlast two winters; or if a pony were lost or geese strayed, she was the first in the search, overleaping dykes and outrunning the quickest boy in the *toon,* coming home after many miles of cliff and bogland, with her dark eyes aglow and a quiet heart.

On this day she had wandered as far as the Horse of Cullivoe, on word of a sheep having fallen down the banks there; and although she found no truth in this, it was when she stood high on the cliff that she counted near a dozen fountains of spray rising and falling against the green serpentine rocks of Gulberwick.

Swift? Oh, she was fleet! None on the island could run like herself. She flew over bog and rocks and walls as lightly as a bee over heather; and she came at mid-afternoon into the post-office, her empty *kesshie* flapping on her shoulders, her brown *hap* snug and close about her face, scarce panting from the exertion.

"The whales is come," she sings, "and never a man in the *toon* but what's lame or crippled, only the schoolmaster and the minister.

It 's the women must ca' them in, and show that we can do without *them* 'at thinks theirselves our betters!"

The postmistress droned and protested, but the mad lass was presently away in the shop, taking down a bottle of stout; and before the old woman could question or lift hand she was outside on the stones, and had made herself a horn such as the laddies use when they hide in the mica caves and make all the island believe that the steamer is coming.

So Osla, having wasted the brown liquor, played the trick as she had learned it, the hoyden! She stood screened from view of all the hillsides, and drew from her bottle such a series of drones and of blasts as might have made the dead come crawling out of the churchyard at Baliasta.

At the first call noses were pressed against window-panes and the good wives checked the turn of the wheel; at the second the women stood in the doorways, shading and straining their eyes for glimpses of the steamer, the schoolmaster held his ferule suspended and the minister waked from his doze; at the third folk began running down the paths. Surely the steamer would be in great distress! And with the fourth, such a trumpeting and bellowing as no captain in his senses would have tolerated for a moment, such a concatenation of weird sounds as set all the sheep-dogs howling in concert, Osla came out laughing and really breathless this time, and explained to a huddle of frightened women what was the matter.

"There 's no a man in the *toon*," sighed the postmistress, from her doorway.

"And what of that?" said Osla, with snapping eyes. "We 'll just take the flit-boat and the mail-boat together; and we 'll show the men that women can do a thing or two without their help."

But her hot words cooled in an atmosphere of doubt and reluctance.

"Dear, dear!" says one.

"We should all be drooned," says another.

"And sea-sick surely!"—a third.

"I mind when I was going to Lerwick"—a fourth.

And then followed a chorus of lamentation and dissent.

But Osla had left them and was trying to push the lighter mail-boat into the water.

"Tamar," she says, "you 'll be captain of this, and I 'll look after the flit-boat. And if there 's ever a wife or a lass here that 's willin' to earn a bit o' siller for her bairns or her men-folk, she may just jump in. The others we 're no wantin'."

"I could maybe steer a bit," said a voice out of the silence; and one or two others added that they might row if so be the sea did not make them sick. From this poor beginning the boats were presently

manned, and some two or three others that lay idle on the beach; and Captain Osla, unfurling her sail, gave the word to push off.

But at this there was lamentation both on board and ashore. On the sands, the postmistress, who was alike too fat and too responsible to venture, muttered prayers under her breath. Old Brucie Clark, who was past ninety, sank in a heap and rocked herself, and could not be got to her feet again. Jemima Nevin shrugged in her shawl and cried with face-ache and excitement. Mary Johnson held her twins almost upside down under each arm, and they added to the uproar. In the boats things were not much better; some of the women who had said they could row in an emergency got seated the wrong way, and there was a great screaming from others, when places were changed, that they would all be thrown into the water. Another was already so sea-sick before she stepped off the pier that she was scarcely in her place before she had to be set ashore again.

In all the hubbub, Osla stood by the great sail, quiet and scornful; and when her voice could be heard she called out, "If fear 's upon any of ye, ye 'll better be getting out now than later!" At this they settled down a bit for very shame, though some of them would always be talking.

There was a thin group of old men among the crowd on the pier: the lame, the crippled, the blind, unfit to cope with the day's weather, but even among them was some piping and urging that they go in place of the women. And one among them, in a shrill, childish voice, sang out that it would be better to loose the school and see what the laddies could do with the master.

But the red of shame swept over Osla's cheeks and she cried, "Push off, Tamar! We 'll show them yet what the lassies can do."

But before the heavy flit-boat had swung a foot's breadth from the pier, there came a sound of running and a laugh, and poor mad Thomasina of the Howe, she that had a laddie and none to father him, flung herself to the fore and tossed her bairn high in the air, so that by a sweep of the arm that all but pitched her headlong into the sea, Osla barely caught it at the breast, while its mother cried, "Tak' the wee laddie for luck! It 's more as he 's ever brought to me!"

And because she would not turn back for the ill chance of it, Osla called out, "Ay, ay, we 'll tak' him for luck; and it 's luck we shall be having the day!"

And when they had got the small sail up, not so easily as it comes in the writing, Osla would not rest content until she had swathed the bairn in her big *hap,* and drawn this close about her shoulders, with her head of necessity bare; and had knotted it safe about the waist, so that not for any struggling of the babe or pitching of the boat might there be any danger for him as long as she herself was above the water.

Oh, to be sure, some of the women screamed, and others dropped between the thwarts too sea-sick to lift their heads; but there were a good few who stuck to their posts, with such small seamen's craft as they had, until the four boats or five had wobbled and lumbered and pranced in an uncertain line to the seaward side of the spray-fountains.

Then Osla gave the word to draw up in semicircle; and with little aimless side-rushes and backings and sudden spins from heel to toe that threatened overset and panic, the command was to some degree obeyed.

Then the great flit-boat, a ponderous sea-bird, forged steadily ahead, Osla at her rudder; and the others hugged as close as they dared. Thomasina's bairn, in the thick of the armament, surveyed the scene placidly—women and whales and waves—and sucked his thumb. And as Osla gave the signal with uplifted hand, there broke over the waters such a chorus of shrill and dissonant sounds, deep below all the booming of the empty bottle, as no school of whales had ever heard before.

The leader stood up on his tail and surveyed the little whirlpools of the choppy Sound; and beyond these he perceived with his little sharp eyes the deadly semicircle that was closing in upon him and his mates. The meaning of this he understood from experience; and perhaps seeing his one chance of safety, dropped into his place, and with a strange, long-drawn sigh, taken up by a plaintive mewing from all the young ones in his charge, headed away from the land towards the open.

This was the moment of peril, and the daughter of Vikings flaunted it.

"Not an inch, lasses, give not an inch!" she called; and worked them into a fine confusion of screaming, as she forced the rudder into the nearest hand, and crawled like a cat between those who sat on the thwarts, until she crouched in the bow and out-bellowed the advancing whales.

"Keep on, keep on!" she shrilled. "Don't be fools! Don't be cooards!" And in her excitement she caught up an extra oar and flung it on the very nose of the first whale, so near had the monsters come.

This or the noise or both determined the rout. The little broken circle of boats rocked like cradles as the great sea-beasts, nosing foam before them and kicking up waves in their rear, headed panic-stricken for the shore.

Ah, it was a thing to remember! Here a great black snout set a boatful a-shrieking; there a whirling abyss of green all but sucked in the new mail-gig. But the lumbering flit-boat was steady and relentless in her pursuit of the flying host of the sea. And Thomasina's bairn forgot to suck his thumb and crowed with a rapture that Osla noted, even in the thick of the battle.

They were grounding—the whales were aground on the sands of

Gulberwick! And the tide was on the turn; and far out at sea was visible the first red sail of the returning haddock boats. The men would come in, said Osla to herself in triumph, and would find their labor done. But she would not let herself think how Eric Saemundson would look when he heard of her doings. That blond-bearded giant held that women should keep to their places by the fire.

But then she forgot her triumph in pity to see the wretched monsters beating out their lives in frantic efforts to get loose from the treacherous sand. She turned her eyes away from the shallows, horrid with fins and flapping tails and writhing black bodies. Instead, she looked outward to see whether it would be Eric coming in first as usual.

She had no heart for the commendation of those on shore, and she climbed very shakily up the stone steps, wishing already that she had heard the last of the day's business.

It was Eric who came in first, laden to the water's edge. She waited in the background while he was making fast and listening to the accounts of the chase for which he had come too late. But when many hands would have dragged her forward, she broke loose and fled away to the high hills.

And Eric said no word, nor looked her way, being a Norseman; but went below and came up with an axe on his shoulder, smiling grimly: "Now it is men's work." With that the heroic women vanished, for there was none could bear sight or sound of butchering.

One by one the haddock-boats came in, and the men undertook the task that lay on their beach.

And when enough had been done, and they dispersed to their homes, big Eric looked two ways at once, flung down his axe, and, stopping no more than to wash blood and grease from his face and hands at the nearest cottage, banished all thought of supper and set out for the high hills.

He almost came up with her, huddled against a heap of stones, her shawl over her face; but she was warned by his stride and fled visibly, he after her, over rock and bog, in the spring twilight. She doubled, she tricked him; she led him over bad ground that she knew better than he; she laughed at him, her taunts flew backwards on the wind; but when he overtook her, she stood, very calm and frosty, in a fairy-ring whence the scattered lights of the *toon* could be seen, coming out, one by one, like stars.

"We 'll just be going home now," says she, stepping downward, as if no such thing as flight had been ever near her thoughts.

"Ay, that we will," said he, "to a home of our own, where ye bake the bannocks and leave men's work to the men."

Oh, the flash of eye that she sent him! But it beat as helplessly as rain on the rock.

"And is this all the thank-word ye've got?" she said, and could have bitten out her tongue at once, for lowering her pride to make complaint.

"Thank for what?" he asked coolly. "The chase ye give me over the hills after my hard day's work, or goin' supperless to speak a word or two wi' ye?"

"If yon's all your words," said she full bitterly, "ye'll better be going home!"

"And so I am," said he, "an' ye wi' me. And the banns shall be read the first time Sunday next."

But the pride of a glorious achievement still burned in Osla's breast. "And would ye buy my weddin' ring—gin I were to dream o' such a thing—wi' the siller I have earned for ye the day?"

"You earned?" said he. "What siller?"

And she: "Great gowk! The siller for the whales!"

He stopped short in his tread and stared at her, breathing hard; then he laughed until the hills echoed:

"Did ye never think of it before? They're fighting it out below now; and unless the master gives way, it's maybe a lawsuit there'll be in Aberdeen."

She could not find voice to question, and he laughed again: "Oh, if it's men's work ye would do—ye'd better have taken a man along, or loosed the school at the master's biddin'! Maybe ye dona ken the law? It's a third for the laird, and two-thirds for the men that ca' the whales ashore; and since there was never a man in the case to-day till the creatures were beached, here's the laird claiming three-thirds because they were stranded on his ground. And where's the siller to come from for your wedding-ring—hey, my lass?"

She flung off his arm and fled away again; but this time not far. He all but stumbled against her, her head buried in her arms over a gate of the toon-dyke.

Being a Norseman, he had not too many words; and she would not accept such comfort as he had to offer.

"Losh!" said he, out of patience at last. "A wilful lass is best left to her own thoughts. I'm going home to my supper."

She let him go, ten feet or twenty, to see if he would turn, but his face was as set as the compass to the pole.

"Eric!" she called, but he would not turn.

And when again she spoke his name, clearly enough, he gave no sign of hearing.

"Eric!"—and now she walked after in his footsteps, but slowly.

"Eric!"—his name floated out again, and he slackened his pace a little, but did not glance over his shoulder. "It's only a question I would be asking ye."

She asked it of a rigid figure that continued its stalk over the home pasture-lands as if unaware of her existence. "Would ye be glad to get your share of that siller, without the law?"

This brought him to a stop; but he said nothing. She sidled up till she could peep over his shoulder—being a tall girl. "Did ye say it might ha' done to take the laddies? Would one laddie do—just one?"

He turned a wooden face to the pleading dark eyes: "Ye 've made a fool o' me long enough!"

"Oh, but 't was not my meaning! I would just be saying that we took Thomasina's bairn wi' us for luck, and maybe——"

He strode on again: "And what if it would? What 's that to me? or the siller? or anything? When a lass sets out to be a lad, when there 's a lad as wants her to be a lass, she generally makes a fool o' the two o' them. Get along wi' ye!"

"Oh!" she cried so piteously that he stopped again, though he would not turn.

"I dona want to get along wi' me," she pleaded, this time not venturing near.

He reached her in two strides: "Is this the lassie 'at chased the whales?"

"It doesna make any difference," said she dolefully, "if it takes mad Thomasina's bairn to gie the men their rights."

And again he laughed so that she held her breath in fear of what the neighbors would say.

"Ye 'll stick to your wheel and your bodkin," he said. "No more chasin' of whales once you are married to me."

And, strangely enough, she was not grieved or offended, but fumbled happily with her apron, while he came nearer and nearer. "No fear o' that," she said. "All the way over the hills to-night, I were a-thinkin' o' the great lumberin' whale 'at 's been a-chasin' me!"

And with that they made it up; and she was well content that Thomasina's bairn should buy the wedding-ring.

THE JESTER'S EPITAPH

BY GRACE SHOUP

KING of those realms in which none speak of sorrow,
He held his sway for many weary years,
Fighting back pain from each day to its morrow,
Wearing a smile above a heart of tears.

HER COLLEGE VISIT

By Robert Sterling Blair

"WEDDING announcement, eh?" inquired George, as from the mail on the table I picked out the usual square envelope indicating that you are expected to come and bring a gift, or announcing that the deed is done and that you were not even among those present.

"Yes," I said; "and a year ago I would have guaranteed that I would be the best man when Phil Vaughan joined the Order of Proud and Somewhat Youthful Benedicts."

"Is there a story in it?" asked George, seating his long frame in the easy chair opposite and poking a Havana half way down his throat, with the graceful motion of a man ramming home a stopper, and then taking it out long enough to say with drowsy interest, "Once upon a time."

"It is not a fairy tale," I replied, "but keep awake and keep still and I 'll tell you about it."

"All right," he grunted, eyes already half closed.

"You see," I began, "I was always fond of a practical joke—too fond for my own good. Four years in preparatory school and three years in college did n't refine that inclination out of me, though it 's considered beastly bad form across the river, and this tendency nearly resulted in my breaking up Phil's love affair, without my intending any such disaster. Phil and I had roomed together, freshman and sophomore. He was a fine fellow, and liked me first rate, though I am sure I jarred his sensitive nature at times. He was a good student and so was I—especially during the two weeks preceding examinations—but Vaughan did n't have to decorate his classic brow with a wet towel and chew coffee beans to keep awake on the last stretch to read his recently-purchased notes. He was a good athlete, and his head was filled with a lot of correct notions about helping the other chap when he 's down. Many a spare hour he spent working over in the college settlement. Out in his home-town they lauded him up as the model for all the fellows to trim by."

"Where 's the lady?" queried George, opening one eye, and extracting the Havana.

"She enters now. Vaughan was engaged to a nice girl—her name is

coupled with his on this card. I 'd never seen her until we tried a joke on Vaughan. The Delta Upsilon were to give a revival of an old play by Marlowe. It was one of the events of the college year, and of course Vaughan invited Miss Endicott—that was the young lady's name—and her mother out.

"Vaughan did n't know what he was about for twenty-four hours before she came. He salted his coffee at breakfast, and at dinner put a piece of chocolate pie down his collar instead of in his mouth. I guyed him, but he did n't realize it, so I gave it up. Might as well stick pins in a paralyzed man so far as results went. The Endicotts came, had a lovely time at the play and the reception which followed, and the next morning they were to come out and see Vaughan's college room before they took the train for home.

"It occurred to me that I ought to have a hand in their reception, so I arranged with Sanborn, who roomed across the hall, that he should come in and help me fix the room when Vaughan had gone out. About ten-thirty Vaughan went over to the car station at the square to meet his guests. When he left, the room appeared as if it had been cleaned by a Dutch housewife; it looked positively uncanny—not a bit like the room we were used to. On the window-seats the pillows were nicely arranged and smoothed out, instead of swatted in the middle and kicked into the corners. You could see the top of the study table for the first time since it had been knocked over by accident two months before. It looked really pretty and ladylike.

"Then Sanborn and I started in to give it a more Bohemian atmosphere. We went first to Sanborn's room, and he began to dig in his trunk for some posters. I stood in a corner while he worked. Sanborn unpacking a trunk reminds one of a dog digging in a sand-bank to bury a bone.

"Sanborn held up the posters, and asked if I thought they were giddy enough. I thought they were. When we had the collection tacked up in Vaughan's room we thought there was no doubt about it. Ladies in bathing suits, or what looked like them, were drawing attention to the various excellencies of certain light wines and brands of cigarettes. In all parts of the room one was face to face with a girl with a merry twinkle in her eye.

"'Now, that 's what I call a brilliant effect,' said Sanborn admiringly, as he gazed at a damsel in crimson hanging above the fireplace. 'I 'm an artist,' and he stepped off the box he had been using, onto me where I was crooked over the andirons, trying to pick up the tacks he had dropped.

"'It *is* brilliant,' I assented, looking at the stamp of his shoe-nails on the back of my hand. 'You 're an impressionist.'

"'Beg pardon,' he said; 'hands on the floor, no place to step.'

"'What shall we put on the table?' I asked. 'It looks as if it were for plain study now, and that won't do.'

"'Wait a moment, old chap,' he said, and he disappeared, only to reappear a moment later looking like a wet-goods store on two legs.

"'Where on earth did you get so many whiskey bottles?' I demanded in astonishment.

"'Got 'em to keep chemicals in for experimental purposes,' he replied cheerfully.

"It struck me afterward that it was queer that nothing but bottles of a certain kind would do in his quest for scientific information.

"He placed a choice assortment of bottles on the table, and in various effective places on the mantel and book-cases. The head of one was left coyly peeping from beneath a cushion on the window-seat.

"'Begins to look something like,' remarked Sanborn, squinting at his handiwork with a critical eye.

"How we worked to put on the truly artistic touches! We scattered some poker-chips carelessly over the pipe-tray, along with a couple of packs of well-thumbed cards.

"'Do you know of anything else that would make this look any more like the abode of a high-roller?' I asked.

"'No, I don't believe I do,' said Sanborn slowly. 'You 'd almost think I lived here. It really has the local color, as Professor Harris says. But, speaking of the atmosphere of this picture, that could be improved. Close those windows, please.'

"'What for?' I demanded.

"'Wait and see.'

"I closed the windows and came back to the table. 'Now you light your pipe,' he said, and we lighted up. 'Now I 'll sit over here,' he continued, 'and I 'll tell you when they show up.'

"We sat and smoked in silence. 'Can't I open the window just a little?' I said chokingly at the end of a quarter of an hour.

"'Not an inch,' he replied grimly, puffing away like a steam-tug. 'This local color is improving wonderfully—begins to go with the pictures and the centre-table.' He surveyed me meditatively for a moment. 'You look a little white, greenish white, around the gills,' he said. 'Losing your local color, eh? Well, remember that you invented this little scheme, and we need smoke, and lots of it, to carry it to a successful conclusion.'

"We puffed away for a while longer. The smoke was so dense that Sanborn on the window-sill seemed to float in a gray bank of cloud. Symptoms of revolt were manifesting themselves in my inner man. 'Er—I 'm going out,' I said at last, rising hastily, and making my way unsteadily toward the door.

"'Very good. Here they come,' he said, pushing after me and

softly closing the door behind him. We crossed the hall, climbed up on some chairs and looked through the transom of Sanborn's room.

"They came up the hall. The mother paced majestically in front, Vaughan walking behind with Miss Endicott. They were utterly oblivious to the two heads gazing intently down on them from the transom.

"'Step right in,' said Vaughan to Mrs. Endicott. She opened the door and entered. From where we were she seemed to disappear for a moment in a blue haze. Miss Endicott and Vaughan followed. For a moment the ladies coughed violently and stared wildly about them. As for Vaughan, he had no expression whatever. He was literally petrified. We found out later that for the moment he thought he had got into the wrong room. He turned to speak to Miss Endicott. She was gazing with a cold and icy expression—the kind Miss Boston wears in the comic papers—at the lady in crimson above the mantel, whose foot was pointed coquettishly toward the ceiling. Vaughan gave a gasp, started to say something, that I should judge would go with the surroundings, and then choked it off.

"'I guess some of my friends must have been in here,' he managed to say at last.

"'Oh, friends!' said Miss Endicott, with a rising inflection that caused Sanborn and me to dodge and knock our heads together in the transom.

"'I see they brought their refreshments with them,' she continued, eying the centre-table.

"Vaughan started as if to wreak vengeance on the offending collection on the table, when there was a crash followed by a scream from the mother.

"'For heaven's sake, what 's that happened?' I queried.

"' The majestic mother has just seated herself on the cushion that had the bottle under it,' answered Sanborn placidly. 'Only bottle that had anything in it, too. Seems to me I can smell it clear here,' he added.

"The next instant Mrs. Endicott appeared in the doorway, coughing and wiping her dress with her handkerchief. The awful impressiveness of her indignant countenance did not make me envy Vaughan his future mother-in-law.

"'Looks like a female John Knox, does n't she?' whispered Sanborn.

"We could hear Vaughan struggling with the window, and his wild attempts to make an explanation, followed by the chilly responses of his fiancée.

"A moment later Mrs. Endicott reëntered the room. 'Come, Margaret,' she said sternly; 'we will go;' and go they did, the girl with

her face set and crimson, leaving Vaughan, after a haughty 'Good day,' utterly crushed and dumfounded in the doorway.

"Now, this was not quite what we had bargained for. We had thought that the whole thing would have blown over as a good joke. So dazed were we by the sudden departure that we never thought of pulling our heads out of the transom. Vaughan, turning back, glanced up for a moment, and understood the whole thing. An instant later the collection on the centre-table followed his glance through the transom.

"We barricaded ourselves in and waited for him to cool off. Strange noises came from across the hall; there was a continual tramping to and fro, and we could hear Vaughan's voice as if giving orders, followed by the 'Yes, sah,' and 'Dat were orful,' of Job, the colored porter. We were unable to peep out long enough to get a good view of what was going on, as the slightest move on our part brought fresh souvenirs hurtling through the transom. I will state that they were mostly my things that came through in this way. At last we heard Vaughan walk out and down-stairs. We pulled down the barricade, and dashed across the hall. The room was over half empty; Vaughan's things were gone.

"Sanborn and I regarded each other blankly for a moment. Then we started out to find Job. He was in the cellar, cleaning up, his shirt so tinted with dust and moisture that he looked as if he had run his color.

"'Can't do nuffin' fo' you now, gemmen,' he said. 'I 's jest done a heap o' tuggin' an' luggin', an' I 's all tired an' sweat out. Where Mr. Vaughan gone? Well,' he drawled slowly, 'Mr. Vaughan he 's done gone ter room in anudder hall, an' if yo' take my advice yo' won't go foolin' roun' his quarters, leastwise not fo' some time. It 'll take all o' two months fo' him ter cool down. It 's too bad Mr. Vaughan is done gone,' he said, shaking his head sadly.

"Sanborn and I cleared out. I sent a friend over to patch matters up with Vaughan, but he would have none of it. When we met, which was but seldom, he looked through me, instead of at me, and I would feel compelled to gaze into the next store window for my reflection, to assure myself that I was still a material being.

"About a month after the episode Sanborn came into my room looking pretty solemn—that is, solemn for Sanborn. 'Do you know,' he blurted, 'that our performance broke Vaughan's engagement to Miss Endicott into splithereens?'

"'Great guns, no!' I said. 'Bad as that?'

"'Yep,' he said; 'just been up-country, and heard all about it. When the girl got home she sent Vaughan a note saying that she did not care to see him again, and that he need not write, as she would not open the letter.'

"The next train carried Sanborn and myself up-country. We did

not reach the Endicotts' home until about eleven at night. We felt, however, that we must see the thing through, so we rang the bell, and at last induced them to let us in. We had a very bad half-hour. We made a clean breast of the whole affair, and they in turn told us just what they thought of us. I won't tell you, George, what they said, as you might agree with them. First the girl rolled us over the coals, and cried; and then the mother took a hand and did it all over, with the crying left out. She threw in a dental smile now and then during the process that would send a quiver down Sanborn's fat frame. He said afterward that he should hate to meet her in Africa if he were a missionary—a ridiculous idea in Sanborn's case.

"Class Day we caught sight of Vaughan and the girl. She was deeply absorbed in looking at Vaughan in his cap and gown. Vaughan did not see us, and we kept off to one side until they got by. Somehow we felt out of place in their neighborhood."

"Ever seen them since?" asked George, when I had finished.

"No, but evidently they have n't forgotten me, as witness this card."

George got up slowly, and threw the stub of his cigar into the grate.

"Do you know how I would have felt," he asked, "if I had been in the making of that practical joke?"

"How?"

"I would have felt my ears flapping in the wind."

"We did."

THE SONG

BY FREDERIC FAIRCHILD SHERMAN

ACROSS the keys her fingers drift
Like blossoms on the stream
Whose music fills with ecstasy
The garden-place of dream.

Her white arms rise above its waves
Like lilies at the brink
Of this clear brook of melody
At which I gladly drink.

Then from her lips as through a rift
In the bright skies above
There falls a song that shames the lark's
To tell me of her love.

PLUCK VERSUS DIPLOMACY

By H. B. Dean

SOME people said St. Margaret's Hospital was the coolest place in town. This might be true up in the large, dim wards with windows wide and awnings dropped, but below in the basement dispensary it was hot, sticky, and malodorous. From the ambulance courts six granite steps led down to a door opening on a large, low-ceilinged room, lighted and aired by two small windows. With its hard wooden benches, it was a weary waiting place that hot August day for those who came for treatment.

Some few talked in low tones to chance acquaintances of the dispensary, but the majority sat in silence, watching the glass door which led to an adjoining room. Occasionally this door would be opened by a nurse whose "Next!" lessened the waiters by one. Early in the day her voice was as crisp and fresh as the blue and white uniform she wore, but with the lengthened shadows in the court voice and gown became limp.

The benches were almost empty when a small boy, balancing his thin body on one leg, hopped down the granite steps and sank wearily on the nearest seat. The occupants of the benches gathered around with cries of sympathy. As their voices penetrated to the adjoining room, a white-coated young house-surgeon came out. At his approach the group parted, and the boy, raising his arms as if to a friend, whispered, "Say, doc, will youse give us a lift? My foot it 's queered this time for keeps."

With a smile of assent the doctor gathered the small patient in his arms, and the two disappeared behind the glass door.

For has it not been tested and proved by the children of the streets that all small troubles, such as cut heads or bruised bodies, will be healed without fuss if taken to St. Margaret's direct? Whereas the same misfortunes brought home are greeted with much wailing, many scoldings, and little help.

The doctor placed his small charge in a chair facing a large open window. Then, lifting the bare, much-stained little foot, he whistled low and long as he saw the head of a rusty nail firmly imbedded in the sole near the arched instep.

Turning to the nurse, he said, "When you get that cleaned up

a bit, we 'll put him on the table and give him a few whiffs—he 'll need them before that nail is out."

Now, the boy liked the cleaning-up process, for the cool water soothed his pain, and he knew Miss Eaton's deft fingers would not hurt; but going on the table was another matter, and accomplished only with much persuasion. For when one is lying flat, without even a pillow, it is impossible to keep watch on that white-coated person, who is no longer a friend but your greatest enemy. Even the nurse was not to be depended upon, for she held over his face a cup-shaped affair of most suspicious odor.

At its first whiff he sat erect and gasped, "No, ye don't, doc; none o' dat! De gang 'ud call me a sis. Say, youse know Mickey Fagan wid de cut head—*he* never smelled dat sweet stuff when youse sewed him up; so cut it out."

To this sturdy appeal the young surgeon replied, "Very well, son, if you 're game, I guess we can stand it," and he promptly injected a solution of cocaine into the foot, near the injury. Under its benumbing influence the nail was speedily extracted, and the wound cauterized and dressed.

The ordeal over, the boy lay exhausted, but when the wagon-bed was wheeled in, to carry him to the Children's Ward, he needed no further stimulation.

A storm of protests, threats, and denunciations was hurled against nurse, doctor, and hospital. For did not Mickey Fagan go home as soon as his last stitch was in? And was Mickey Fagan to be the one and only hero of the block? To all of which the doctor gravely explained that, as St. Margaret's was a hospital and not a prison, the patient was free to go at any moment; but he would advise, or merely suggest, that a night spent with them might prove more comfortable than if passed at home.

But to these diplomatic remarks, as well as to Miss Eaton's persuasions, he turned a deaf ear, and stubbornly started on his weary trail. Through the waiting-room and up the granite steps he toiled, and then out into the hot court.

Instead of attending to those who were still there, nurse and doctor followed him to the door, and stood watching his painful journey across the sticky asphalt. When almost within reach of the tall iron gates the small body wavered uncertainly, and one little hand shot out as if for help. With a bound the doctor was at his side, and, catching him before he fell, carried him in and up-stairs to the Children's Ward.

As the small burden was laid on a cot, a feeble but understanding grin passed from boy to man. Stooping low, the surgeon heard a whisper, "Youse won, doc; but, on the level, I 'm glad."

LOVE AND DEATH

By Louise Satterthwaite

LOVE, the infinite, questions always Death, the infinite.

Finite beings in a finite world, we look about us and note the inevitable change of all things living. Things we call dead remain to some degree the same, but the living thing progresses—on and on until the cycle is complete, when it drops away.

We read therein the fate of this our body. Good-by it must be some day to all the things in which we find delight. Good-by to the sweet earth, its birds and flowers. Good-by to pleasant companionship of men and books. Good-by to the house wherein we have wept and laughed, quarrelled and kissed. It is good-by to all this, we agree sombrely, but since we are not cowards we can bear it.

Aye, sometimes when the flesh is weary and friends betray and the world is unkind, the idea of the quiet grave is not so unwelcome; death —its peace, its cessation from endless striving and vexation and misunderstanding—rest! rest! we sigh—Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

We will not whimper, when Death beckons, because of the material things we must leave, nor the material joys; but Love, before the image of Death, stops its ears, averts its eyes, sits trembling.

Love, the infinite, the unsatisfied, the grasper after the eternal, cannot be content with the thought of rest and peace, even from its own tumults.

Love regards the grave questioningly, misdoubts even that six feet of earth can dull its sensitiveness to the beloved's presence.

Love says that three-score years and ten is only a scant portion, after all, in which to love. Love says that it does not wear out as does the body, nor rust out; neither does it ask for surcease.

Love asks why it should ever have existed if it was to die—claims that it has a right to expect, even after earth shall have passed away, to see again its beloved, if only as a thin and disembodied spirit.

Ah, we will give up all else, we say to Death, seeking to strike a bargain; we will willingly resign all these our toys which we did find so amusing; all these beautiful things in which our eyes found delight; all these comfortable things which made us refreshed after toil; we will give everything, Death, most willingly, if you will but leave us Love.

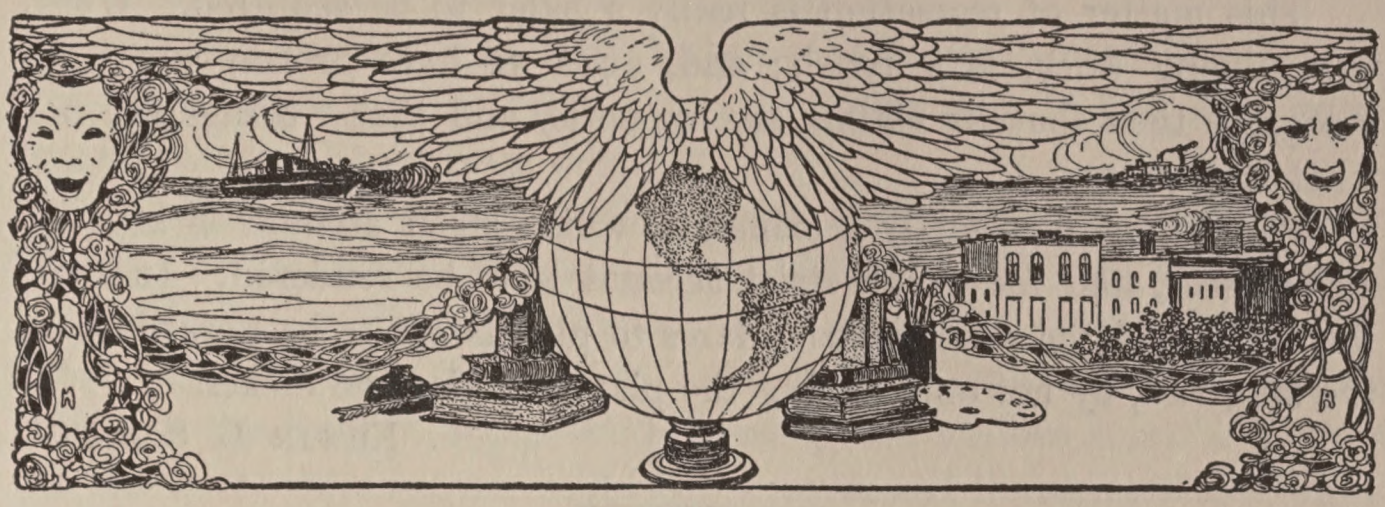
Death answers not, to be sure, but we are not to be daunted. Holding fast to Love's hand, we descend into the Valley of the Shadow, and with Love's gracious presence close by us, so long as our faculties serve to comfort, we go even into the tomb and, lying down, sigh happily that we are still not yet entirely alone.

Love, the infinite, questions always Death, the infinite; and though Death answers not, Love believes that all shall be well.

THE CRITTER-PATHS

BY CORNELIA CHANNING WARD

WHAT joy to tread the critter-paths
That wind around the corn,
To walk the narrow grassy lanes
The cattle took at dawn,
To trace within the forest road
The tracks the rabbits made,
To find a tiny partridge trail
Half hidden in the shade;
To follow, follow after them
Throughout the long sweet day,
To lose yourself awhile upon
Each labyrinthine way,
To let your spirit dance along
Where yellow leaves are whirled,
To drink the color carnival
Of all the autumn world;
And then to take at evening tide,
Within the deep'ning gloam,
The pretty little hidden path
That leads you safely home.



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

AFRAID TO PLAY

POSSIBLY this anecdote, current in at least one section of the United States, is current in all sections: that of the old chap who loved to take his ease, and who despised being driven. Said he earnestly: "Now, lookee here—I'll tell you something: *You* can work steady all the year through, and I'll knock off to go fishin'; and at the end of the year there'll not be a difference of more'n five cents between us—*and I'll have the five cents!*"

To the grinding, steady worker such philosophy is not only heretical, but exasperating. It must be misleading. Of course it is misleading. Yet—does it not explain, perhaps, why Jones, whose means are the same as ours, takes now and then a day off and seems to live just as comfortably?

Many an American worker is afraid to play. He is afraid to break his routine lest the lapse shall be counted up against him as a misdemeanor. Dollars and cents represent to him his progress—and it cannot be gainsaid that in certain cases this is the training of necessity. However, when he takes the bull by the horns and boldly asserts, on occasion, his independence, he will find, to his astonishment, that work is not, after all, so rigorous a bookkeeper.

Would we, who spent twenty dollars last year on a trip, to-day be twenty dollars richer had we not gone? No, probably our bank account would not show a penny difference. If, six months ago, we had not

attended the theatre, would we now be two dollars ahead? Would we have fifty-two dollars instead of fifty? No, sir, and no, ma'am!

This matter of recreation is really a habit to be acquired. Work, unremitting work, is a fetish; and, once we have broken away, we recognize then that its claims are hypnotic, and that "things are not what they seem."

Play is not necessarily a crime, of which strict account is kept by an overseer, and for which strict account is to be rendered. In fact, the man (and the woman) who dares to play *is* apt to be rewarded, in the long run, by not only having the play, but also the nickel.

EDWIN L. SABIN

MILITARY TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MILITARY training for boys in our public schools should interest not only our foremost educators but all who have the welfare of the republic at heart. The standing army of the United States is so vastly disproportionate to its size, its population, and its importance as a world power, that the nation's chief reliance in time of war must ever be its volunteer soldiery. That the school-boy of to-day is the volunteer of to-morrow was amply demonstrated during the war with Spain, when splendid service was rendered, both as officers and in the ranks, by men who had received a knowledge of soldiering at some of the many educational institutions, public and private, which include military training in their curriculum.

In these days military operations are conducted with such celerity that there is scarce time to whip an army of raw recruits into shape to withstand the trained and seasoned troops of, say, an old-world power. How much better fitted to uphold the honor of the flag is the man who has had at least a partial military training than he who comes fresh from the farm or from civil life without such knowledge—however enthusiastic, however patriotic, he may be! And that this training should be begun when the mind is in its most receptive stage, as it is in youth, seems incontrovertible.

It has been advanced as an objection that such training in the public schools is dangerous because it is likely to foster among American youth a spirit of militarism, with its consequent belittlement of the civic power. Surely such a theory is not worthy of acceptation. The American soldier has always stood for law and order, and he who as a boy has been taught to revere his country's flag, and has fitted himself to defend it in time of need, cannot fail to make all the better citizen therefor.

But apart from its patriotic side, military drill is of decided physical

benefit to boys. The inculcation of the spirit of discipline, teaching the boy, as it does, prompt and unquestioning obedience to lawful authority, will also prove to be invaluable.

In some few cities military training has already been included in the educational work of the pupils, and wherever it has been tried excellent results have been obtained.

In Boston, which has probably the finest body of public school cadets in the United States, military drill is obligatory on all male pupils in the public high schools. More than two thousand boys are now organized as a brigade of infantry, the four regiments which compose the brigade being divided among the various schools. Drills of one hour's duration are held twice a week, and the strictest discipline is maintained while the cadets are in uniform. The drill season opens in September, and in the latter part of May is brought to a fitting close with a field day, in which all the youthful soldiers participate.

The West Middle District School of Hartford, Connecticut, of which the writer has the honor to be military instructor, has included military drill in its course of study for over a quarter of a century. This branch of scholastic work has always been very popular with both parents and pupils. The cadets drill three times a week, from October to June, and at the conclusion of the term are reviewed by some prominent official, usually the governor. Many of the students of the school have held commissions, either in the army or in the National Guard.

Almost all boys are naturally interested in soldiering, and they heartily enjoy having it made a part of their school life. If proper advantage were taken of their willingness to learn, the nation would soon have an enormous body of at least partially trained defenders to call upon, should an emergency arise requiring them.

FRED GILBERT BLAKESLEE

A NEW EXPLANATION OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

IN the midst of all this pother about Christian Science, I should like to say a word, not of defense nor of attack, but of explanation. For the most interesting problem about anything is how it came to be; and by no magnification of Mrs. Eddy's organizing talents can the success of her church be accounted for.

I think the chief factor in winning converts to the new faith is that it offers a refuge for the individual from scientific fatalism. The tendency of science for half a century has been strongly toward establishing a determinism in the universe, from which human kind are not exempted. Most of the literature and science of to-day sounds that fatalistic note. And the busy, energetic, self-confident American

does n't like it. He wants his own way. Christian Science offers him a means of getting it. Instead of telling him that he is a mere atom, tossed hither and yon by forces inconceivably greater than himself, Christian Science assures each man of the limitless might of his own will. Disease, disaster, death itself, have no real existence—don't ask for definitions of that word "real." The only real thing is Spirit—and you are the spirit. See?

Is it any wonder such a creed prospers in such a land as ours? No amount of mismanagement—real or supposed—and no preposterous claims, could keep it from prospering. It exactly suits the American mind; I mean the American mind that has not received a scientific training. And the religion that suits a people is going to make converts among them. Just as the Arab and North African found comfort in a creed which assured them once for all of the despotism of the universe, and relieved them from any responsibility; just as the weary Brahmin hugs the notion that some day he will lose his burdensome individuality and be absorbed into the Infinite,—so does the American turn to a cult which assures him that it is all up to him, that he can do anything in the world he really wants to; and that there is nothing in the universe but a free will, in which he has a large share. It is characteristic, wholly characteristic.

Of course there are other factors. Mrs. Eddy's organizing ability is one. Another is the loosening of ecclesiastical ties, which permits people to follow their own bent. Another is the past conduct of too many of the medical profession—and this has been a big factor. The doctors, or most of them, have for centuries preached the gospel that man is saved by drugs alone; they have taken the credit of cure when their only merit was to abstain from killing; they have neglected the truth that nine-tenths of our ills run their course with little regard to any treatment that does not absolutely murder the patient. This "Thus-saith-the-Lord" air is getting rare among the physicians of the present day, it is true. But the mischief has been done. When people have been taught for ages that the cure of a sick man is due to something outside his own body, they are going to give the credit to the nearest thing handy, whether that be a rabbit's foot or a dose of calomel or a C. S. healer.

Truly, the keystone of the Christian Science arch of triumph is the appeal to the stubborn individuality of our people.

George L. Knapp

FOREIGN PHOTOGRAPHS

Oh, Mr. Robinson, how *do* you do? I 'm right glad to see you again! My! is it only two months? It seems years and *years* since you were standing on the wharf waving good-by to us. Say, you know that little American flag I was waving at you from the back end of the boat? Well, we carried it everywhere we went, and we 'most always managed to have it showing. Popper mostly had it tied on his umbrella, and sometimes Grace had it for a bow at her neck. Cousin George took it out in church once, and the man came and wanted him to put it away, so we all got up and marched right out, to show our disapproval of foreign tyranny. Oh, we were real patriotic, I tell you! Popper said he guessed we were n't ashamed of *our* country, and we let everybody know it, too. We lost 'most everything we carried, one time or another, but we never lost that flag nor my camera. And I know you 'll want to see the pictures we took—they 're just splendid. We had fine luck about the light and everything, and Mommer says they 're priceless souvenirs of our pilgrimage. Here 's the album. It begins right away on the steamer going over. This is our party the first afternoon, all lined up and looking pretty. Don't George look handsome? . . . Oh, well, of course I 'm not there, because I took it. Here are some that George took of me after I 'd got my sea-le—after I 'd got to feeling all right again and wore my white sailor suit. . . . Never *mind* who gave me the flowers! You need n't look at these; they 're some George took when I did n't know it. . . . Well, it 's just the second officer; he was an awful flirt, but so manly. I do admire a manly man—with a *mus*tache. George grew one when he found that out. Now, these are what I took at Chester; we 're all standing on the walls, or perhaps it 's the cathedral behind us. . . . Them? Oh,

they 're a couple of Englishmen we just sort of met there. One of them was awfully struck on Grace. We found out he was a baronet—that is, he 's going to be a baronet as soon as six of his brothers die. He was rather modest about it himself. But Popper was so delighted he insisted on calling him " my lord " right away. Mommer hoped he 'd invite us all to visit his baronial halls, but he did n't. They had to squeeze up pretty close to get everybody into the picture; that 's why you don't see more of Chester. Here we all are in London; me, too, you see. I got a policeman to take us; he was tickled to death to do it, I guess. He said it was a rum go. I know that is London, because we 're right in front of one of those American Bars that used to make Popper and George so tired. They said the cocktails tasted like hair-oil. There! is n't that a fine one? It 's Saint Peter's at Rome! Don't you see it? Right there, that little mushroomy thing between Grace and Ella. I suppose if we 'd taken down our parasols you 'd have seen it better. Popper did n't think much of Rome; said it was mostly in poor repair and had no future. But I thought the Lido was lovely. Oh, I guess that 's one of the canals in Venice, is n't it? This is all of us just getting into a gondola—Mommer wanted to snap it because it was such a poetic scene. . . . Well, the gondola does n't show in the picture; no, that 's Aunt Hattie's foot. She always gets in the way, somehow. I just fell madly in love with the gondolier till I found he 'd been a barber in Jersey City. George says a gondola is a gone dollar! George is always saying bright things like that. This one is Popper and Mommer and Grace and Aunt Hattie and Cousin Ella and George in Paris. Let 's see, I guess it 's Paris; yes, it must be, because Mommer 's wearing her new hat she bought there. She called it an artistic confection. I guess it must have been; it only lasted a week. This is the Eiffel Tower. . . . Well, I don't blame you. It 's just behind Aunt Hattie. This is all of us, taken by three perfectly sweet officers in the hotel at Berlin. I say it 's Berlin, but Grace is just positive it 's—— . . . Yes, I suppose it might be 'most any place. We went all over Germany—Berlin and Dresden and Nuremberg—because I was specializing all summer on music, languages, and art, and you get so much of them all in Germany, especially language. But if you go to the best hotels and take Cook's tickets everywhere, you don't have to bother with much of any language except good United States, and Popper says that 's good enough for anybody. That 's really the way to see the national life of any country, and, besides, you meet so many

nice Americans, no matter where you go. Oh, say, do you remember Harry Strong, who was so attentive to Grace last winter? We met him and five other college boys at Heidelberg, I think it was, or else it was Genoa, and I tell you it was grand, after seeing nobody but strangers and a few foreigners all summer. Here we all are in a bunch. The background don't show very plain, but I guess it 's a beer-garden. In Germany we spent all our time in beer-gardens. Popper said they were real homelike. I don't care at all for ice-cream soda now. This is a big crowd of us waiting for the train to start up Mount Vesuvius—no, it 's the Gorner Grat; you can tell by the sign on the car. That 's Grace and Ella talking to the Count of Waffenicht. He was at our hotel, and Popper was so pleased to meet a real count that he lent him two hundred and fifty dollars. The very same evening the count got a message his mother was dying, and he had to leave in such a hurry that he forgot to give Popper his address. This is Mommer and Aunt Hattie and Ella and me just being put into a carriage by the consul at Brussels. Of course we went to call on him to show him our American flag and get the latest news from home—we always did that wherever we went—and after we 'd been chatting about an hour and a half he simply insisted that our stay at Brussels was n't complete unless we went out to see the field of Waterloo, and he was so kind about helping us get started! He is n't in the picture because he took it. He was glad to; he said he was; but somehow he seemed in a hurry; so it does n't show much of anything but Aunt Hattie's back. Aunt Hattie is a perfect dear, but—well, Grace says she knows she could have made that Austrian diplomatist propose the third time running if Aunt Hattie had n't come out to look at the moonlight on the Rhine, too. No, the rest of the album 's empty. George said what was the good of taking any more photographs—we 'd remember the trip sure enough after we became—— . . . Well, I did n't mean to speak of it; but don't you dare breathe it to a soul! It is n't to be announced till next Sunday.

Samuel F. Batchelder

An Effectual Remedy

Despairing Wife: "Our Tommie keeps running away from school. He 'll never learn anything!"

Husband: "Don't worry. I 'll give him a lickin' that 'll make him smart!"

Charles C. Mullin

The Country's Need

"I say," said the old lady with the high-pitched voice, as the jerk-water slowed down at Grigsby Station—"I say, what is all this fuss about educatin' boys to be civil engineers? The thing this 'ere country really needs is a few civil conductors, and less sassy brakemen."

Harvey P. Bennett

$29,000,000

By William Heyliger

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"
"I 'm going for kerosene oil," she said.
"Will you buy Standard, my pretty maid?"
"I must to help pay off the fine," she said.

Pat's Way of Saying It

Pat is a real Irishman working on a country place up in Connecticut. He had heard some one quote the time-honored wedding congratulation to the happy pair, "May all your troubles be little ones," and it tickled his fancy immensely. Not long ago a friend of his on a neighboring place entered into bliss, and Pat was there and hardly able to hold back his congratulations until the ceremony was over. As soon as he could, he rushed up to the couple and, grabbing each one by the hand, he sang out, "Long life to the both av yez and may all your throubles be little babies."

W. J. Lampton

Moses in a New Light

A Philadelphia Sunday school teacher said recently to one of her pupils:

"What can you tell me about Moses?"

"He was a gentleman, ma'am," suggested one little boy.

"A gentleman!" repeated the astonished teacher. "What do you mean?"

"Well, ma'am," said the little boy, "when the daughters of Jethro went to the well to draw water, the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses helped the daughters of Jethro and said to the shepherds:

"'Ladies first, please, gentlemen!'"

Elgin Burroughs

PEARS' SOAP

An Indian crystal gazer or any close observer will tell you that the secret of a clear, healthy skin is in a constant use of Pears' Soap—also that Pears' will show you how good a complexion nature intended you to have.

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

"*All rights secured.*"

An Eye to Business

A seven year old boy in western Pennsylvania is very much interested in his father's business, which is that of an undertaker. One evening his father and mother took him to the theatre. The play was so thrilling that it drove sleep from even his young eyes. He sat entranced until the curtain was about to fall on the last scene, in which the hero was most tragically killed. At sight of the motionless form on the stage, the boy was suddenly seized with an eye to business. Turning eagerly toward his father, he piped out in a childish treble that could be distinctly heard in the solemn hush that reigned throughout the house:

"Say, papa, will you get the job?"

G. F. G.

DICK'S PLEASANT DREAM

By Bide Dudley

I had a dream the other night.
  I wisht it would come true.
I 'd git revenge fer lots of things;
  That there 's jist what I 'd do.
I dreamed I got to be a king,
  An' say—the things I did
Wus so derned fine it broke my heart
  To wake up jist a kid.

I dreamed I set there on my throne,
  All dressed in garments glad,
When in there come a dook an' prince,
  An' with 'em wus my dad.
"Ah, ha!" I says. "I got you now.
  Look here, old boy!" says I.
"You made yer son work, did n't you?
  Jail fer you till you die!"

My mother wus the next one in.
  She says, "Hello, my son!"
Says I, "Jist call me 'Majesty.'"
  Then I sure had some fun.
"You spanked me, Mrs. Smith," says I;
  "You recollect it well."
An' then I had her spanked six times.
  She left there with a yell.

How to Lie Awake—

DRINK COFFEE

Then after awhile you can have a round with **Nervous Prostration.** Plain old Common Sense suggests, leave off the irritating, delusive drug and use

POSTUM

and a 10 days' trial will prove

"There's a Reason"

Read the Book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

One has a "Divine Right" to feel fit as a Lord. Why not?

Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Michigan, U. S. A.

Then next my sister happened in.
I had her grabbed right quick.
"I 'm glad yer here," I says to her.
"Bow down; this here 's King Dick.
You slapped me one day, did n't you?"
An' then, in spite of tears,
I had a lord er some big guy
Jist box my sister's ears.

My sister's beau got in somehow,
An', my! but I wus glad.
"Don't smile, old boy," I says to him;
"It's time you got real sad.
You called me worthless—recollect?
Well, things has changed a bit;"
An' then I had 'em kick him out.
Gee! how that feller fit!

Well, I wus 'bout to fine Bill Link,
The kid what stoled my girl,
When some guy chanced to drop his sword,—
I think it wus a earl,—
It woke me up, an', dern it all!
I found it wus n't real.
Gee whiz! I 'm disappointed bad;
You don't know how I feel.

Circumstances Alter Cases

Lady (entering breathless): "I want to stop the divorce suit!"

Lawyer: "Why, you said your husband was an abominable, beastly brute, and you wanted to be rid of him at any cost!"

Lady: "Oh, yes, I know. But now an automobile has run over him, and I want you to start suit for damages."

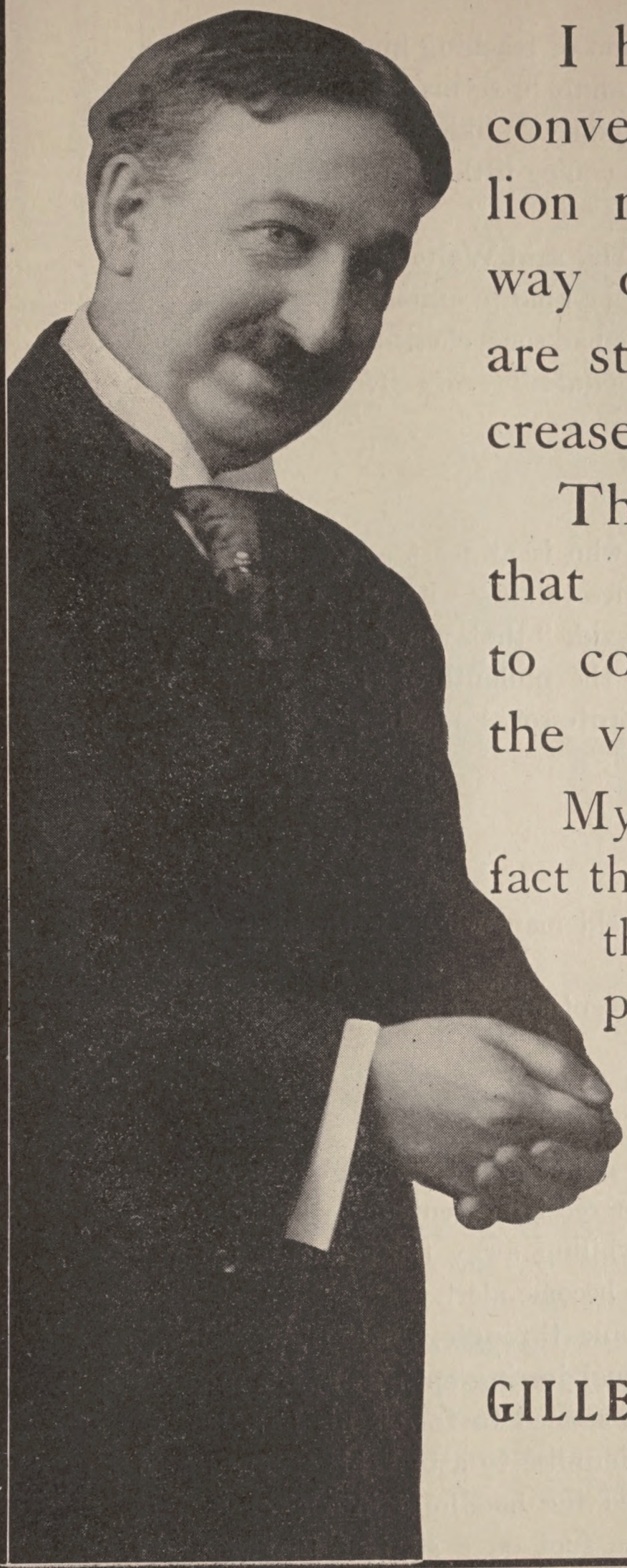
E. H. Wright

A Little Vague

"Is it far from here to the next town?" asked a tourist of a man he met on a rural road.

"Well, it ain't so very fer, nor it ain't so very nigh, an' yit it ain't as nigh as might be if it wa' n't so fer as it is. Still, it 'd be ferther if it wa' n't so nigh, so I reckon one might say that it is betwixt an' between fer an' nigh."

H.



I have, in three years, converted more than a million men to the Gillette way of shaving, and they are still coming at an increased ratio each month.

This is all the argument that should be necessary to convince any man of the value of this razor.

My success comes from the fact that I have revolutionized the art and solved the problem of self-shaving.

The Gillette Safety Razor consists of triple silver plated holder—12 double-edged blades, packed in velvet lined leather case. Price $5.00.

SOLD EVERYWHERE

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GILLETTE SALES COMPANY

271 Times Building

NEW YORK CITY

Gillette Safety Razor

NO STROPPING NO HONING

Little Acts of Kindness

Walter's mother had made a point of teaching him to be very kind to animals. One day he came running in to his mother, exclaiming eagerly, "Oh, mother, I 'm sure you will like the little girl who 's moved in next door. She 's such a nice little girl, mother, and *so* kind to animals!"

"She looks like a nice little girl," said Walter's mother, "and I think I shall like her. But how is she kind to animals?"

"Well," explained Walter, "we had some chestnuts just now, and she found a worm in one, and *she—did n't—eat—it!*"

Louise Driscoll

Equalization

Professor Brander Matthews, who is at least as good a wit as he is a reformer, was overheard once talking with Mr. Carnegie.

"I notice, Mr. Carnegie," he said, "that you don't limp."

"And why should I?" asked the philanthropist.

"Well," slowly answered the professor, "maybe they pull them alternately."

W.

Help Yourself

Out of Town Friend: "Say, old man, where is the best place to get umbrellas?"

New Yorker: "Oh, a large reception or a club-meeting."

C. A. Bolton

Familiar Ground

An old offender known to the police and the hangers-on about the court-room was coming out after receiving sentence, which caused the motley crowd that had been whiling away the moments before the "Black Maria" would start to become alert.

As the rabble opened up a lane through which the prisoner could be escorted, they flung the usual jeering epithets at the unfortunate. For an instant the latter seemed to forget his hand-cuffs and be about to obey his natural impulse to attack his tormentors. A second thought, however, turned the hoodlums into a cheering mass of admirers, for, placing one foot on a step of the waiting vehicle and raising his cap to the throng, he drawled out to the driver with a languid assumption of patrician ease:

"*Home*, James."

Margaret Townsend

The Hour and The Meal

The hour and the meal never miss connections in the home where

SHREDDED WHEAT

is known. Being ready-cooked and ready-to-serve and containing all the nutritive elements in the whole wheat, presented in their most easily digested form, Shredded Wheat meets every emergency of household management. Nothing so nourishing or satisfying when returning from a shopping tour or a long journey as a toasted Shredded Wheat Biscuit with milk and cream or fresh fruits in season; and nothing so wholesome and appetizing for luncheon or an evening "snack" as toasted Triscuit with butter, cheese or marmalades.

Shredded Wheat is the whole wheat made digestible by steam-cooking, shredding and baking. A food to grow on, to work on, to live on.

"IT'S ALL IN THE SHREDS"

THE NATURAL FOOD COMPANY, NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y.

N. G.

Great men are not always good spellers, as is instanced in the case of an Eastern Congressman who, last session, was making out, with his secretary, a list of appointments for speeches in the neighborhood of Philadelphia.

"What 's the matter with Trenton?" asked the secretary, as he ran his eye down the list.

"Nothing at all!" exclaimed the Solon, surprised. "Why do you ask?"

"I see you have marked it 'N. G.'"

"Well, that 's all right, is n't it?" asked the statesman, irritated. "'N. G.' stands for 'New Jersey,' does n't it?"

Taylor Edwards

A Candid Answer

Edith: "How do you tell me and my twin sister apart?"

Tommie: "If it 's a pleasant one, it 's Ethel; if it 's a cranky one, it 's you."

C. A. Bolton

THE ANT AND THE BEE

By Louise Ayres Garnett

It must be hard to be an ant,
For ants work all the day
And never stop, like boys and girls,
To romp about and play.
Now, busy bees, I 'm often told,
Work just as hard as they;
But seems to me that eating sweets
Is very much like play.

Second Choice

There is a Washington lad who, it would appear, assents to the old proposition that it is well to have more than one string to one's bow.

The boy was being catechised one day by a well-meaning visitor to the house.

"Well, Harry," said the lady, "don't you think you have a chance to be President of the United States?"

"Oh, I don't know," answered Harry carelessly. "Maybe I 'll try for it after I get too old to be a pitcher."

Fenimore Martin

MENNEN'S
BORATED TALCUM
TOILET POWDER

"When Frost is on the Pumpkin

and fodder's in the shock," there comes a feeling of satisfaction to daily users of

MENNEN'S
Borated Talcum
TOILET POWDER

at having survived the summer months with **clear** skin and complexions unimpaired. **Mennen's** is a safe and pure toilet necessity, delightful after **bathing** and after **shaving,** and indispensable in the nursery.

For your protection it is put up in a **non-refillable** box—the **"box that lox."** If **MENNEN'S** face is on the cover it's **genuine** and a **guarantee of purity.** Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30th, 1906. Serial No. 1542.

Sold everywhere, or by mail 25 cents. **Sample Free.**

GERHARD MENNEN CO., **Orange Street, Newark, N. J.**

Try MENNEN'S Violet (Borated) Talcum Toilet Powder. It has the scent of fresh-cut Parma Violets

Sent free, for 2-cent stamp, to pay postage, one set of Mennen's Bridge Whist Tallies, enough for six tables.

Presence of Mind—and Body

An official who has been long in the service of the government at Washington tells a good story of the time when Hamilton Fish was Secretary of State.

Mr. and Mrs. Fish had, according to this official, a grand air, an old-fashioned courtesy, that introduced a new note into the Washington society of that time. It has been said that Mrs. Fish sometimes carried her high idea of courtesy too far—that it was Quixotic.

One of her rules, for instance, was to return every call she received. Her husband was continually holding public receptions, and to these, out of courtesy, many women would come who had no desire that Mrs. Fish should call upon them—who were in no position to receive her properly if she did call.

One such woman attended a Fish reception, left her card, and a little later was duly honored by a call from Mrs. Fish.

It was a beautiful, mild afternoon. The Fish equipage, all a-glitter in the wintry sunshine, dashed down the narrow street and halted before the woman's shabby little house with a musical jingle of silver chains. The footman leaped from the box and opened the carriage door and Mrs. Fish descended.

The poor woman of the house was in a dreadful predicament. She was, alas, kneeling on the sidewalk beside a bucket of hot water. Her sleeves were rolled back. She had a scrubbing brush in one hand and a cake of soap in the other. She was scrubbing the front steps.

Bending graciously over her, Mrs. Fish asked politely:

"Is Mrs. Henry Robinson at home?"

And Mrs. Henry Robinson replied: "No, mum, she ain't," and went on scrubbing.

Edwin Tarrisse

City Wise

Farmer's Son (who reads the weekly news): "Father, did n't I hear you say you 're goin' t' sell those three cows t'-day?"

Farmer: "Yes."

Son: "Wal, you 'd better take 'em down to the stream an' water 'em good."

Farmer: "Why?"

Son: "'Cause you kin git more money out o' watered stock!"

Charles C. Mullin

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I WONDER WHY

By Mazie V. Caruthers

I wonder why, when mother 's tucked
  Me in and I 'm alone,
My room should seem so different?
  Now, if I had n't known
That great black Something by my bed
  Was just a chair, I 'd 'most
Been half afraid it was a giant
  Or Mr. Bluebeard's ghost!

My curtain, flowered pink by day,
  Hangs long and limp and white,
So like a lady Goop I feel
  A little scairt at night.
I try to be courageous, but
  When you 're alone in bed
You think of all the awful things
  In fairy tales you 've read,

And, first you know, queer shadows steal
  From out the corners, so
Right where I hung my clothes I 'm sure
  There 's Something moves, and oh,
I feel a crawly, creepy chill
  'Way from my head to feet,
And little girls feel comf'tabler
  To hid beneath the sheet!

Too Much for One

"I am looking for my son," said a sharp featured woman, recently, entering an office building in Washington, where she found the janitor sitting at the entrance, tipped back in a chair. "Have you seen him? He 's a tall, slim boy."

"Very tall, was he?" asked the janitor.

"Very—and slender."

"I think I saw him here a minute ago."

"Where was he?" demanded the woman.

"Well, madam," replied the janitor, "as nearly as I could make out, he was on the first and second floors."

Fenimore Martin

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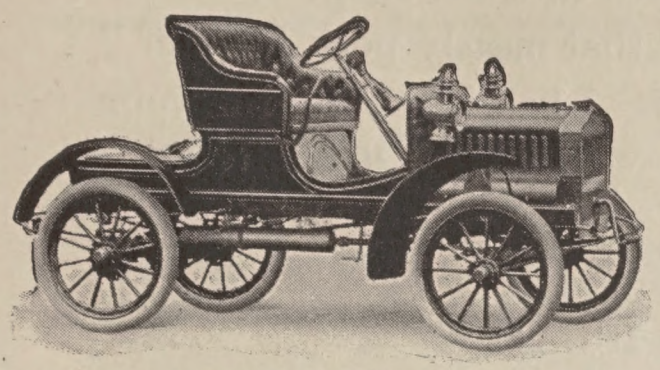

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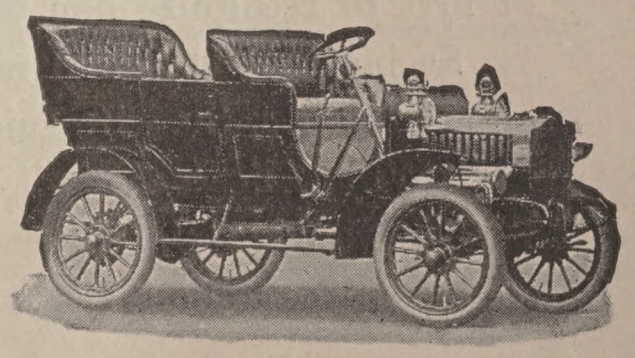

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Got What He Asked For

A distinguished professor of bacteriology, wishing to study infected meats, went into a butcher-shop and asked the butcher if he had any measly pork.

"No, no, sir!" answered the indignant man. "All our meats are fresh—first class!"

"I 'm sorry. Could—could n't you in some way procure me some?"

"Why, yes; if that 's the kind you want."

A few days later the professor stepped into the shop.

"I came in to see if you had secured that measly pork for me?"

"Why, yes, sir. Did n't you get it? I had it sent up for your dinner last night." *M. M. Atwater*

THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

By Robert T. Hardy, Jr.

A Turk with a sizable harem
Said, "I love 'em and really can't spare 'em;
But they call me 'His Nibs.'
And say they 're my 'ribs,'—
Though I wish they were less harum-scarum!"

Gradually

First Student: "How did he get to be a college president?"
Second Student: "Oh, by degrees."

E. H. Wright

Physically Impossible

A Trenton man recently returned home after a somewhat lengthy stay in the West. During his absence he had, according to Simeon Ford, cultivated a luxuriant growth of mustache and whiskers. When the individual who had thus changed the appearance of his countenance appeared in his own household, among those who failed at first to recognize him was a little niece.

Seeing that the child made no move towards greeting her long-absent relative, the wife said:

"Why, Alice! Are n't you going to kiss your uncle?"

"I would, ma'am," cheerfully responded Alice, "but I don't see any place to do it!" *Edwin Tarrisse*

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Too Much of a Good Thing

Mr. George Marshall, a philanthropist who always kept a sharp lookout never to be wasteful, decided to go for a week's camping, taking as his guests some ragged street urchins. One morning he used the bits of meat left from the evening before, and made hash for breakfast. There was some left over, which he concluded to reheat and serve again at noon.

"Johnnie, will you have some hash?" he asked one lad.

"Bet yer life," replied the lad, who was constitutionally hungry.

"Peter, pass your plate for some hash"—to another freckled-nosed lad.

"Not if I knows it," was the unexpected reply.

"I thought you liked hash, from the way you ate it this morning," replied Mr. Marshall.

"I did like it for breakfast," replied the lad, "but none of yer review of reviews for me for dinner." *Emilie Blackmore Stapp*

Wearied

"At least, the audience did n't hiss," remarked the playwright, after the unsuccessful first night.

"No," replied the manager sadly; "they were too sleepy." *Perrine Lambert*

His Neighbor's Cat

A Cleveland lawyer tells of a man living in a suburb of that city whose sleep had been disturbed nightly by the howling, on his own back fence, of his neighbor's cat. At last, in despair, he consulted his lawyer.

"There sits the cat every night on our fence," explained the unhappy man, "and he yowls and yowls and yowls. Now, I don't want to have any trouble with this neighbor; but the thing has gone far enough, and I want you to suggest a remedy."

The lawyer looked solemn and said not a word.

"I am well within my rights if I shoot the cat, am I not?" asked the sufferer.

"I would hardly say that," replied the legal light. "The cat does not belong to you, as I understand it."

"No."

"And the fence does?"

"Yes."

"Then," concluded the lawyer, "I think it safe to say that you have a perfect right to tear down the fence." *Elgin Burroughs*

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The Same Effect

There had been a brilliant company at the home of a society leader in Des Moines, Iowa, a woman whose husband was known better for his wealth than for his mental attainments.

"Well, Francis," she said, after the last visitor was gone, "it was a complete success, was n't it?"

"Sure!" observed Francis.

"Did you notice Professor Billington?"

"The man with the bandage around his neck?"

"Yes. What an astonishing vocabulary he has!"

"That may be," said Francis, doubtfully, "but from the way he held his head, I thought it was a carbuncle."

Taylor Edwards

Taking Her Pick

The following was told at a smoker recently, and it is not so bad either. The narrator told of another little feed he once attended, where eight men were sent home in one hack; and the driver simply rang the door-bell and when a feminine voice called from an upper window, "Who is there?" the Jehu replied, "Missus, will you be so kind as to come down and pick out your baby?"

Harvey P. Bennett

Different Backbones

A boy in the physiology class of a school in South Boston gave the following definition of the difference between the backbone of a man and the backbone of a cat:

"A man's backbone runs up and down while the backbone of a cat runs sideways. A cat is liable to spit and throw up her backbone."

Another boy said of the spine: "The spine is a long bone reaching from the skull to the heels. It has a hinge in the middle so that you can sit down otherwise you would have to sit standing."

J. L. Harbour

'& IN '&

By Louise Ayres Garnett

An Englishman won the fair '&
Of the loveliest girl in the l&.
Said he, "I 'm so 'appy
My 'ead feels quite sappy."
She whispered, "'Ow perfectly gr&!"

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A Lawyer's Luck

A North Carolina lawyer says that when Judge Buxton, of that State, made his first appearance at the bar as a young lawyer, he was given charge, by the State's solicitor, of the prosecution of a man charged with some misdemeanor.

It soon appeared that there was no evidence against the man, but Buxton did his best, and was astonished when the jury brought in a verdict of "guilty."

After the trial one of the jurors tapped the young attorney on the shoulder. "Buxton," said he, "we did n't think the feller was guilty, but at the same time we did n't like to discourage a young lawyer by acquitting him."

E. T.

Plenty of Music

A gentleman of the most cultivated musical tastes, wishing to change his residence, advertised for rooms in a private family "fond of music." The next mail brought him the following reply:

Dear Sir:

I think that we could accommodate you with rooms, and as for music one of my daughters plays the parlor organ and gittar; another one plays the accordeon and banjo; I play the coronet and fiddle; my wife plays the harmonica and my son the flute. We all sing and if you are good at tenner singing you would fit right in when we get to singing gospel hims evenings, for none of us sings tenner. Or if you play the base vial we have one right here in the house. If you want music as well as rooms and board we could accommodate you and there would be no extry charge for it.

J. L. H.

He Guessed Her Age

Among the corps of instructors in one of Washington's high schools is a woman highly esteemed as a teacher of American history. The class under her care had under consideration one day topics concerning the Civil War, when one lad volunteered, in illustration of some point, a lurid account of a battle in which, he claimed, an uncle of his had participated.

The teacher interposed to observe that the anecdote could hardly be true, as the uncle in question was near her own age, and she was not born until after the close of the war.

At this the boy seemed a trifle chagrined at being so evidently in the wrong. After a few moments of embarrassed silence, he said, with the naïve air of one who has much the best of the situation:

"Oh, but, Miss Blank, I did not mean the Revolutionary War!"

Howard Morse

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WILLING

By T. C. McConnell

Said the stuttering baritone Gantz,
When asked by the chorister Rants
If 't was his desire
To sing in the choir,
" I 'd j-j-j-jump at the chants."

Locomotor Ataxia

It was during the recent " pure milk " agitation that a corpulent son of der Vaterland was dilating on the merits of his wife. Finally he said, " Ja; mein Weib iss very partic'lar. She iss so partic'lar dot she would n't trink der milk onless it vas paralyzed!"

James Balsom

Men and Women

Among Men and Women there are Thorns and Roses. No Man likes to be called a Rose.

Among Men and Women there are Beauties and Beasts. No Man likes to be called a Beauty.

Among Men and Women there are those who are too sweet for anything, and those who are the reverse. No Man likes to be called too sweet for anything.

Among Men and Women there are strong-minded and weak. No Woman likes to be called strong-minded.

Among Men and Women there are Bosses and Bossed. No Woman likes to be called a Boss.

Among Men and Women there are Cats and Mice. No Woman likes to be called a Mouse.

W. J. Lampton

Explained

Andrew Carnegie tells of an old Scotch lady who had no great liking for modern church music. One day she was expressing her dislike of the singing of an anthem in her own church, when a friend said:

" Why, that anthem is a very ancient one. David sang it to Saul.' "

" Weel, weel!" said the old woman. " I noo for the first time understan' why Saul threw his javelin at David when the lad sang for him."

T.

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New Testament Wisdom

Little Mabel's grandfather had been reading the New Testament to her, and the parables seemed to arrest her attention. One day her mother, going into the kitchen about dinner-time, overheard her daughter talking in a very peremptory manner to the servants. When Mabel came out, her mother asked her what she had been saying.

"Oh, nothing," she replied. "I was only telling those wicked and slothful servants to hurry up dinner."

Harold Brown Freeman

Two Ways of Looking at It

There is a young artist in Washington, who classes himself as of the impressionistic school, and who, being somewhat off in drawing, generally makes up for his lack of technique by spreading color recklessly and counting on distance for his effect.

At an amateur exhibition he once hung one of his most extraordinary performances.

"Well," said a friend, whom the artist had taken to see the work, "I don't want to flatter you, old chap, but that is far and away the best stuff you have ever done. I congratulate you."

Much pleased, the artist was receiving the compliment with becoming modesty, when he chanced again to glance at the picture —and turned very red. The committee had hung it upside down!

Hurrying to the head of the committee, he was about to launch into a loud complaint, when he was informed of the good news that an hour before the picture had been sold for $61. The original price-mark had been $19.

T.

Each Has Its Attractions

Pat's parents designed him for the ministry, and he entered college with that intent. Had he continued in his ambition, he would doubtless have been an ornament to the profession.

The reason Pat changed his mind was that the more he considered the matter the more sure he was that there was something to be said on both sides.

"Had I been a preacher," he was heard to remark, "I would have had to toot eternally for Heaven, and that I could not conscientiously do—my desire has always been to be an impartial man. Now, Heaven is all right as far as climate is concerned, but for good society you will have to go to Hell."

Harvey P. Bennett

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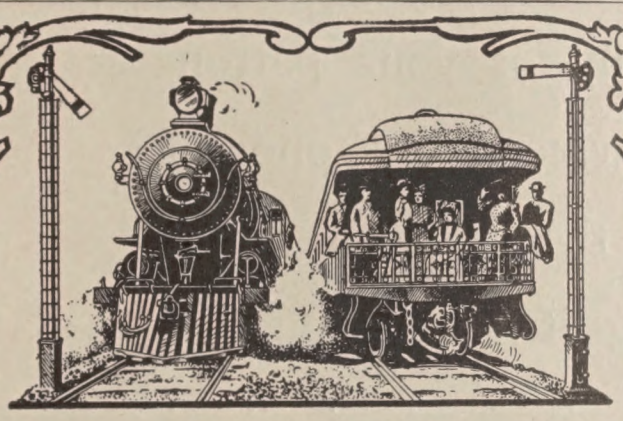

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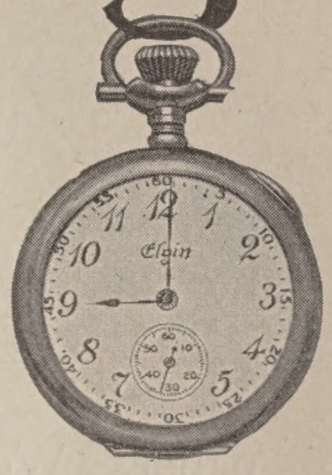

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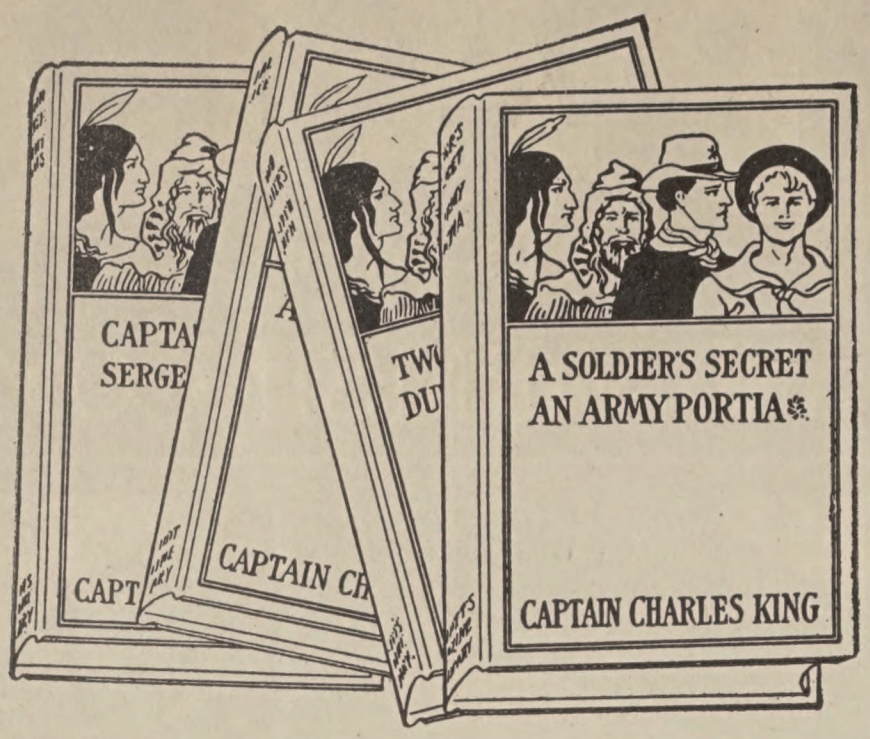

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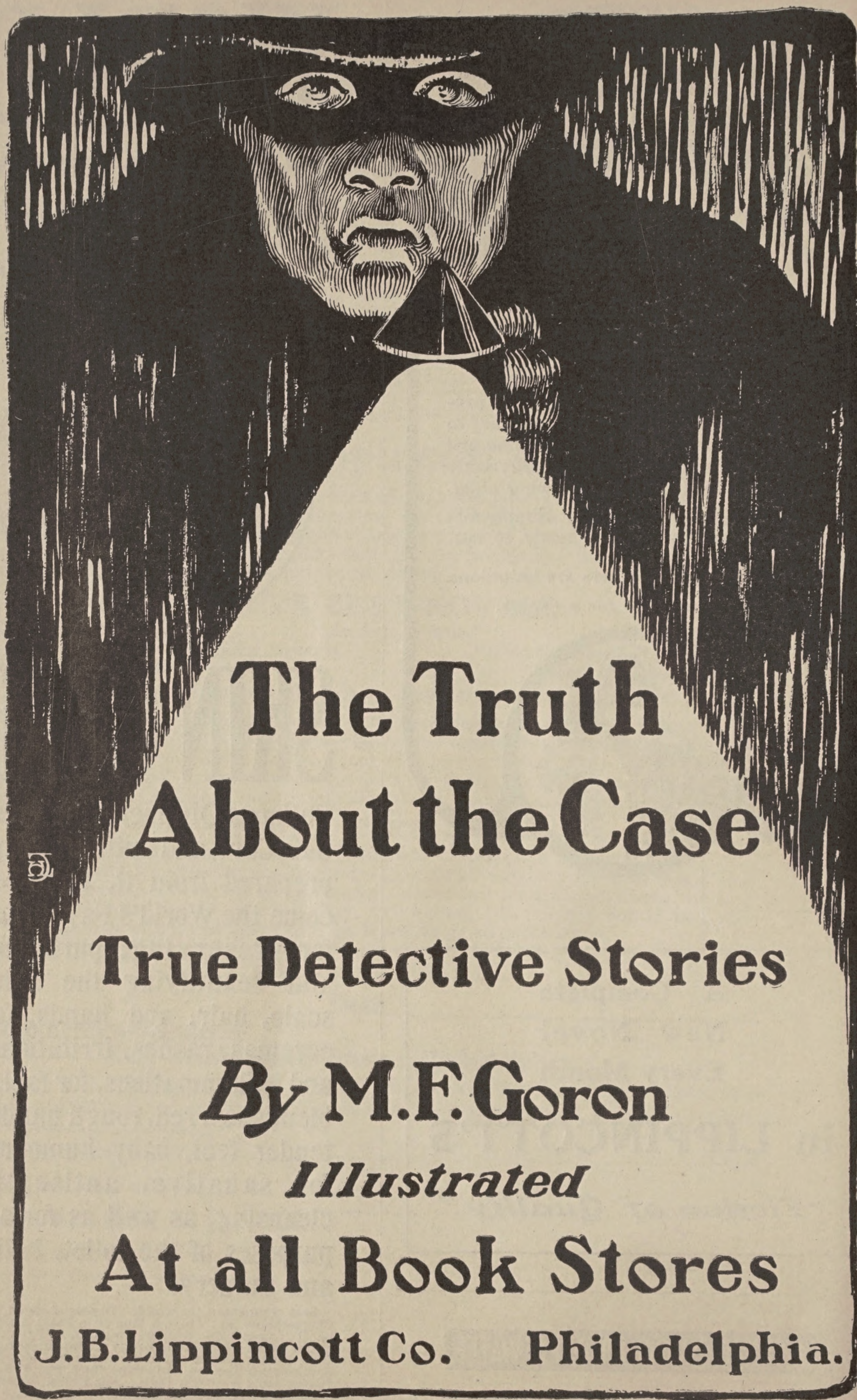

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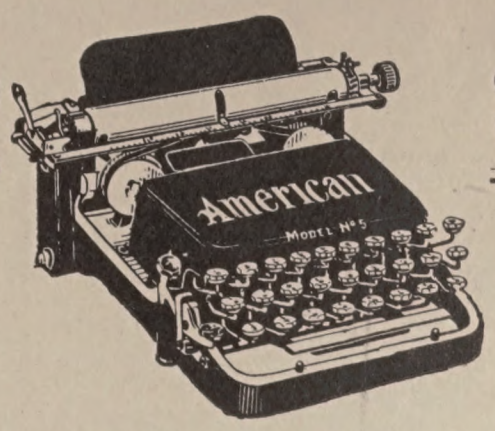
$50  $50

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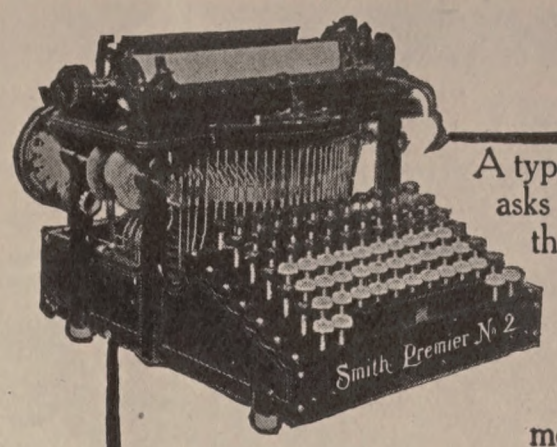

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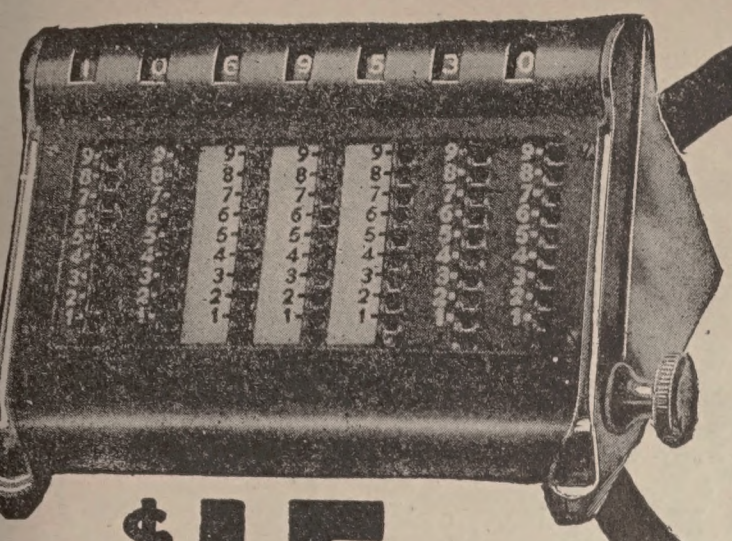

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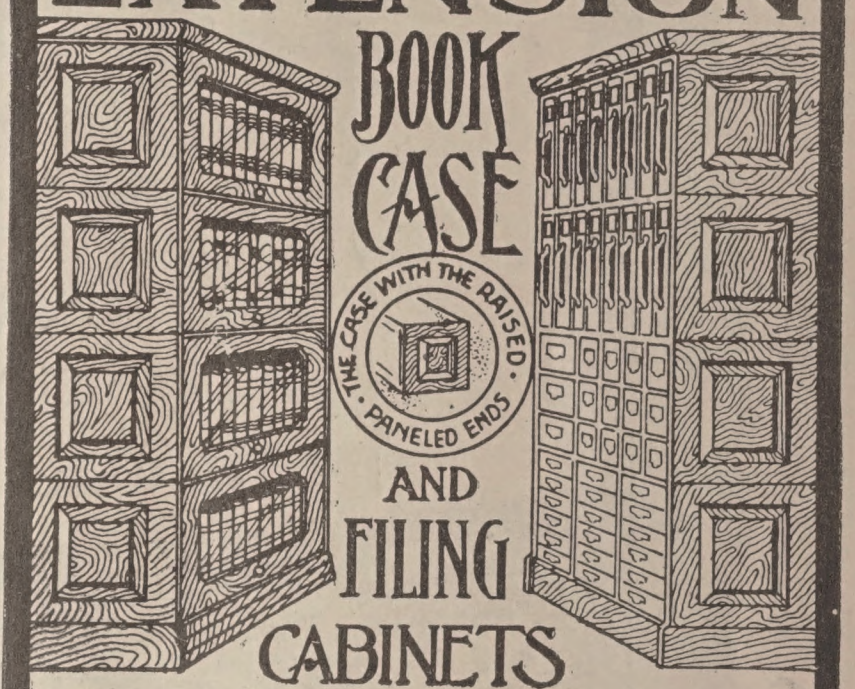

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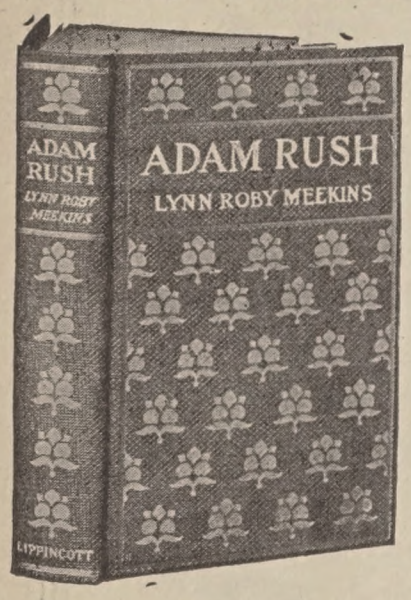

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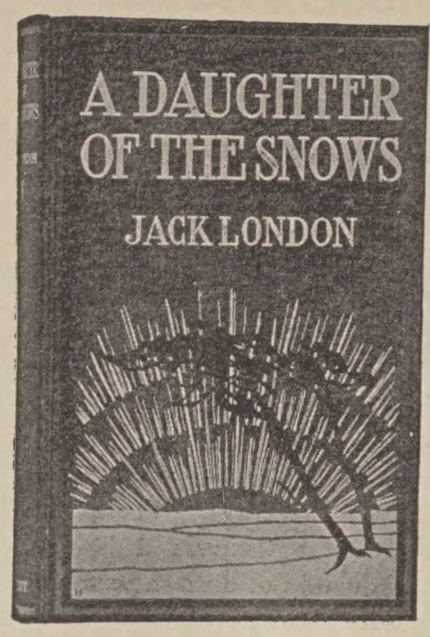

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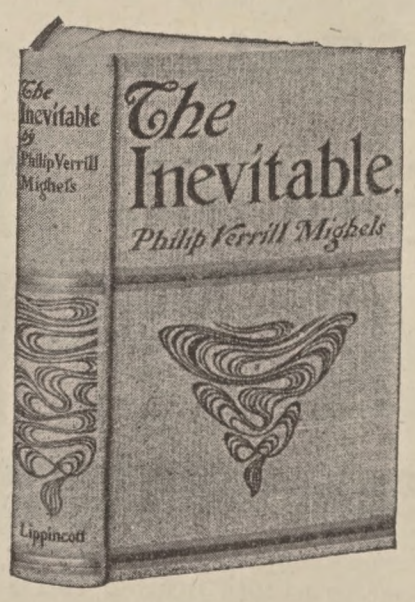

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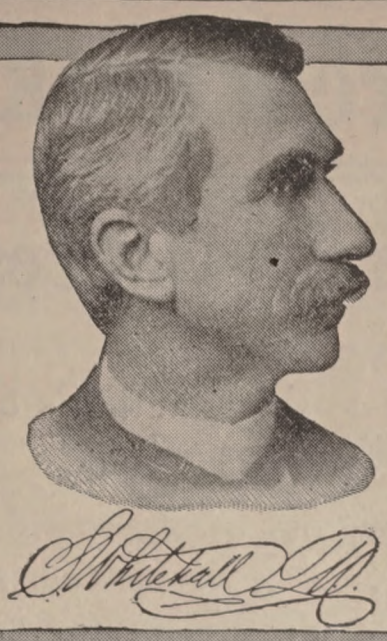

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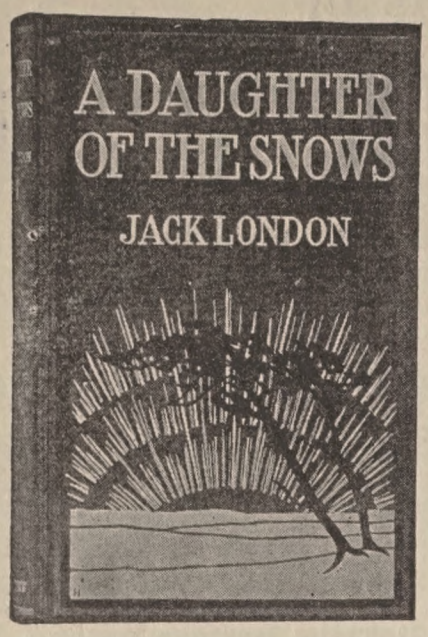

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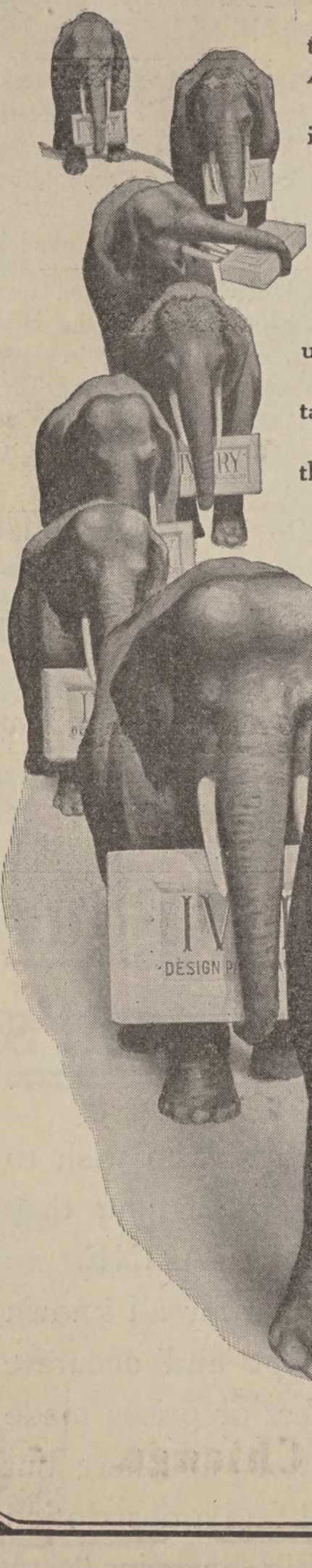

Ivory Soap might well be described in very similar language, thus: "A white, opaque, fine-grained substance with which American housekeepers clean articles of ornament or utility."

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First Principles of Cooking

By MARY JANE McCLURE

During the honeymoon life looks luminous to the young wife. There comes a time, though, when cold, hard-hearted Reality grins mockingly at her. Then she realizes that, after all, life is not one grand, sweet symphony of joy. There is nothing very roseate or poetical about "butchers and bakers and candlestick makers." They bring the airship of romance down to earth with a sudden dull and sickening thud.

Love and indigestion have no affinity one for another. On the other hand, carelessly selected, improperly cooked food and indigestion are twin souls. The moral is vivid. If love is to be kept as a permanent dweller in the home the door must be barred against indigestion. So the sensible young wife begins to study the first principles of cooking.

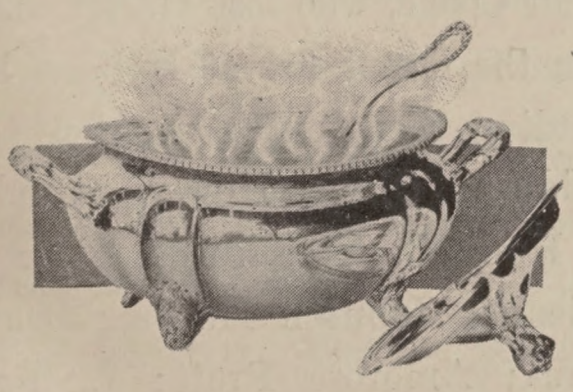
THE science of cookery goes deeper than the mere combination of materials—that may be said to be the chemistry of cooking. Its very foundation principle lies in their selection. For instance, a housewife of experience knows that the cheaper cuts of meat really are the most nutritious, but are lacking in flavor. She will utilize these cheaper cuts of meat in the form of stews, ragouts, pot roasts, etc., adding a little of Armour's Extract of Beef to impart the flavor which they lack. She has learned at least two of the foundation principles of cooking—economy and food values.

Another important lesson is that of quick-wittedness in combining food materials and making the best of a bad situation. Until a young wife learns this art she will be likely to have many unhappy moments.

"Lords and Masters" have a way of telephoning at the last moment that they propose to bring home an old friend to dine. This message usually partakes of the character of a peremptory command. Frequently it happens when nothing but baked beans has been prepared for the evening meal. A jar of Armour's Extract of Beef and a knowledge of how to use it make a big difference at such a crisis. The whole situation will lose its terrors—yield nothing but satisfying results.

A woman who has had no practical experience with Armour's Extract of Beef will be surprised and fascinated to learn the many ways in which it can be used. It has become known the world over as an especially appetizing addition to vegetable dishes, such as peas, green or wax beans, corn and other vegetables. It gives a distinctive flavor which can be secured by no other means. It solves the gravy problem, for it not only colors but gives the real beef flavor when used for this purpose.

For imparting a delicious flavor to warmed over meats it is invaluable. The reason why is easily explained. Armour's Extract of Beef is exactly the same thing you cook out of the meat in the first serving. By adding it to left overs the original zest will be restored.



A new cook book has just been issued by Armour & Company. "My Favorite Recipes" is intended to be a cook book which will endear itself to every woman who comes across it. Besides containing a number of hints for using Armour's Extract of Beef and recipes for many dishes in which that product is not used, there are blank pages on which may be written the recipes which you prize. The miscellaneous hints and tables of proportions in it alone ought to make it of inestimable worth to women who want to to do things the best way possible. Write to Armour & Company, Chicago, enclosing cap from jar of Armour's Extract of Beef, and "My Favorite Recipes" will be mailed to you.

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A Chat with the Editor

Last month we told you about some of the good things in store for our readers next year, and how much pleased we should be to know just what you, and *you,* and YOU, thought of the prospect—not offered in polite tones to the Editor, but just your honest opinion candidly expressed, as to your best friend—with the Editor keeping his ear to the wire to catch every word. That would be indeed a help. Not long ago one of our subscribers wrote to us, "If you folks would let the world know how good your magazine is you would have the largest circulation in the country." That was fine appreciation of our efforts to please you; but we've been in the business long enough to know that unqualified praise is n't the only way to help people, though it undoubtedly does cheer the heart and stimulate energy.

Now let us tell you of an important discovery which we want you to enjoy with us during the coming months. Beginning with November we are going to print a series of five papers on that great American occupation—"WORRY," in its different phases, by a noted neurologist, Dr. George Lincoln Walton. The first one will be on "Obsession," a word used by many nowadays and understood by few. Dr. Walton explains its meaning in clearest terms, and offers various interesting instances, sometimes serious, often amusing, of its astounding power. The other four subjects dealt with in the series will be "The Doubting Folly," "Sleeplessness," "Hypochondria," and "Home Treatment." These talks will be informing and helpful to readers in general, while to nervous sufferers they should be invaluable. No magazine series will be more notable, we are sure.

While the large number of short-story contributors to the Magazine makes it impossible to give you a complete list, here are a few names which fairly represent the whole: Molly Elliot Seawell, who writes but little short fiction to supply the great demand for her work; Grace MacGowan Cooke, who lost all her manuscripts in the recent fire at Helicon Hall so is sending them out now "hot from the griddle;" Olivia Howard Dunbar; Clifford Howard; Kate Jordan; Richard Le Gallienne; Johnson Morton; Seumas MacManus; Ambrose Pratt; L. Frank Tooker; Sarah Chichester Page; Mabel Nelson Thurston; E. Ayrton Zangwill; Will Levington Comfort; George L. Knapp; Lucy Copinger; William Hamil-

A Chat with the Editor.—*Continued.*

ton Osborne; Rupert Hughes; and hosts of others, all good and all at their best in LIPPINCOTT'S.

Our Newest Department

We want to say something about this youngest department in LIPPINCOTT'S which we call "Ways of the Hour." It is just six months old, a sturdy infant, which is going to grow with the rest of our contents—broader, higher, keener, with every number—informed not with dead issues but with topics vital to the present and to the future.

Have n't you some pet theme which you would like to boil down to five hundred words or less and submit for this department?

As to November

We are preparing a regular feast for November, when the evenings are long and our friends look to us to enliven them. There will be a thrilling novelette, by Edith Morgan Willett, called "Under the Black Cassock"—complete, of course, as is everything in LIPPINCOTT'S. She is the author of "The Chauffeur and the Jewels," a popular novelette which we published about a year ago.

John Reed Scott's name you know through his two successful books "Beatrix of Clare" and "The Colonel of the Red Huzzars." We have secured from him for November a rattling good short story, "The First Hurdle." "The Blood O' Innocence" by George L. Knapp is a remarkably strong piece of fiction dealing with heredity. An amusing tale of domestic life is "Home Without a Mother," by Joseph M. Rogers. "Beyond the Pale," by George Brydges Rodney, is a Western story of love and jealousy. A charming picture of life in Virginia is "The Old Folks at Home," by Sarah Chichester Page. Mrs. Israel Zangwill will contribute a sympathetic story, "The Ideal." "Out of the House of Bondage," by Mabel Nelson Thurston, is filled with humor and pathos, with a rural setting. Seven short stories in all.

Then there will be another one of Mrs. John Van Vorst's sprightly sketches of Parisian life called "French School-Girls of To-day." Bonnycastle Dale will give one of his interesting nature talks on "A Canadian Heronry." The paper on "Obsession," by Dr. Walton (referred to above) will open the series of "Worry" articles. There will be also bright editorials from Juliet Wilbor Tompkins, Lewis Benjamin Ely, René Bache, and Anna McClure Sholl.

Our large humorous section will contain more real humor to the square inch than you'll find elsewhere; and there will be verse tuned to the season of Thanksgiving. An all-around satisfying number of LIPPINCOTT'S.

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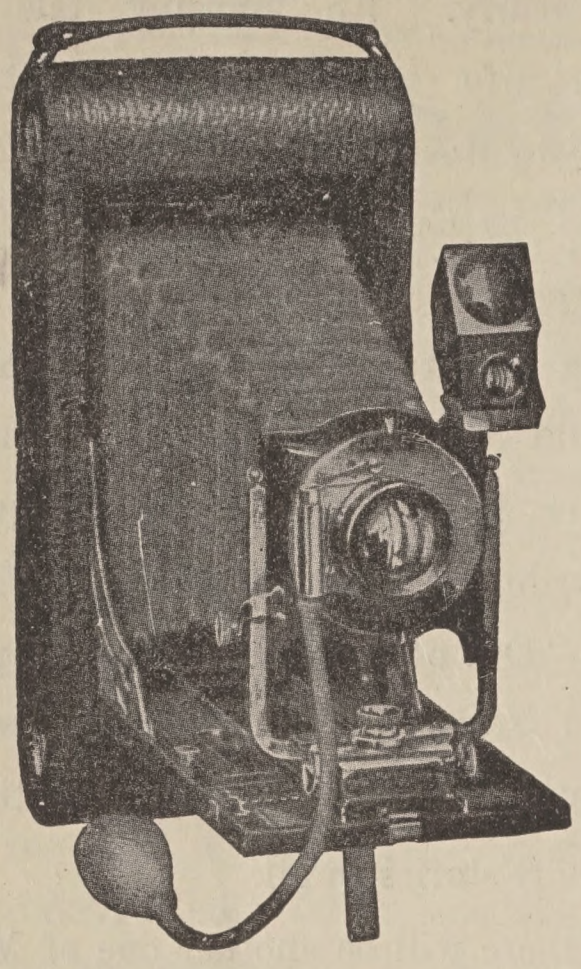

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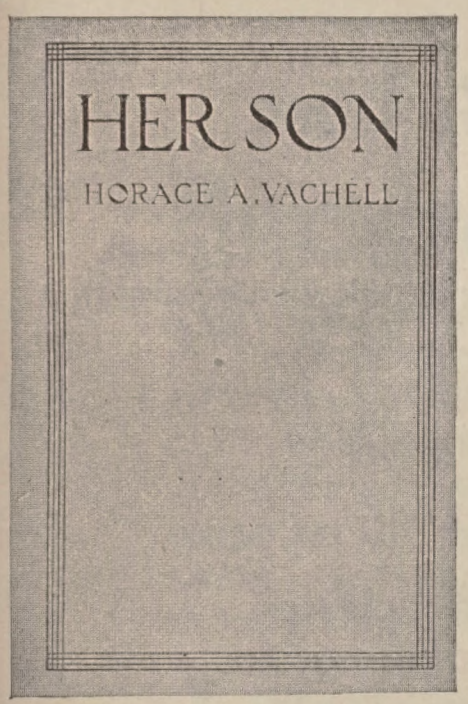

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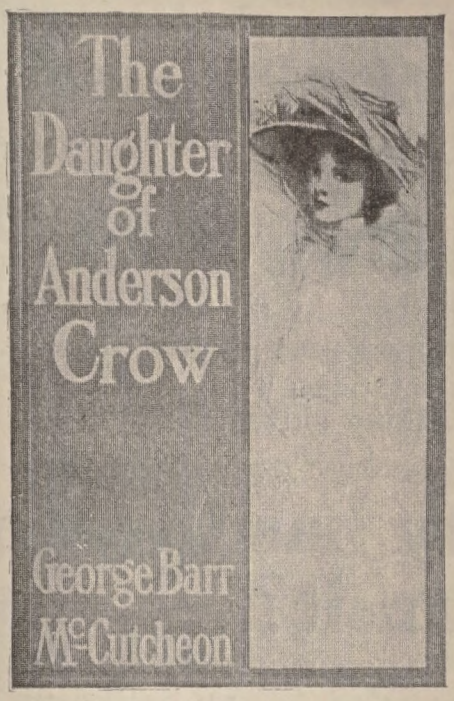

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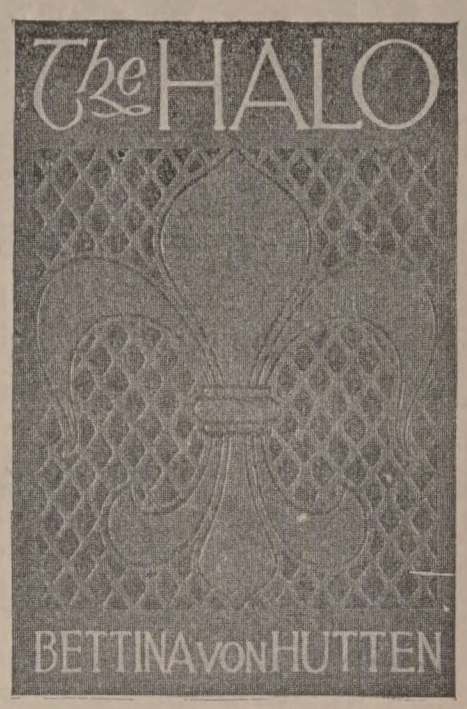

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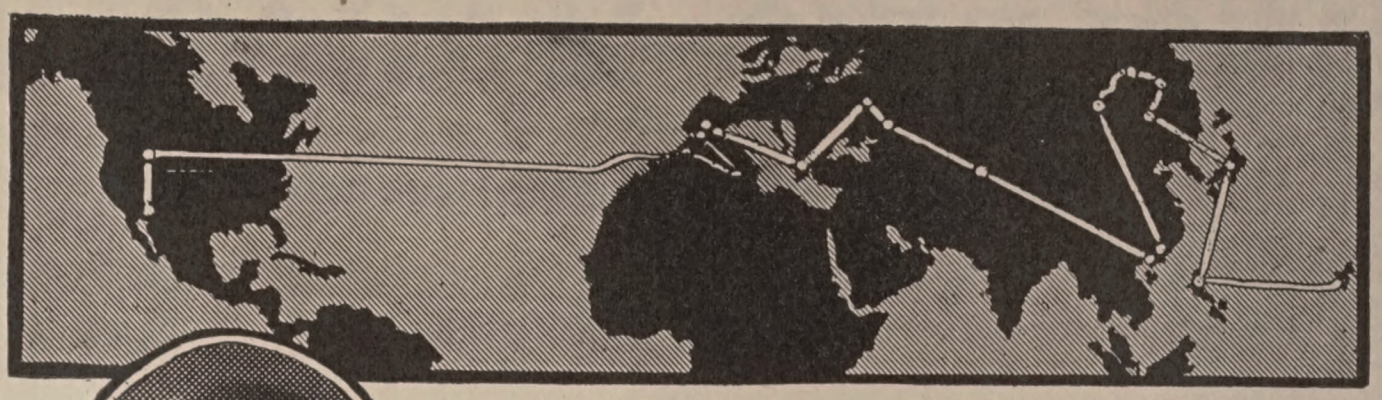

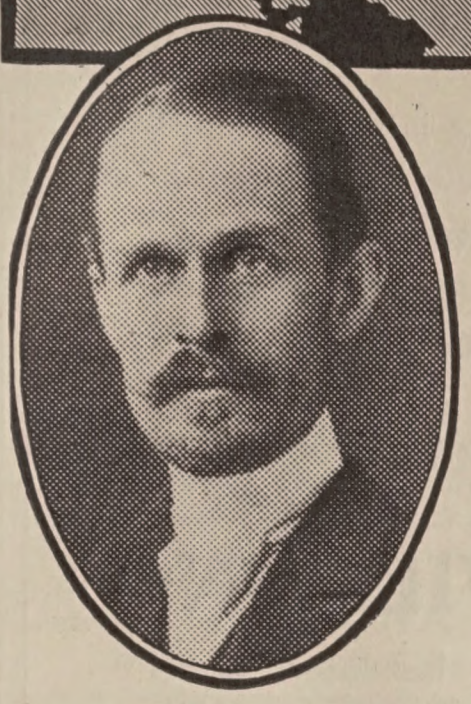

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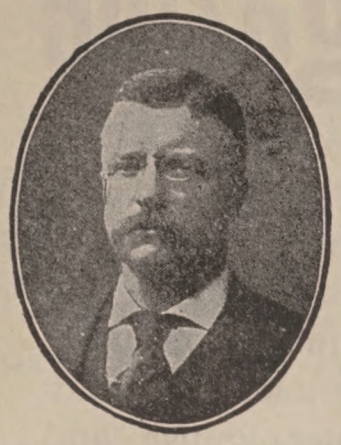

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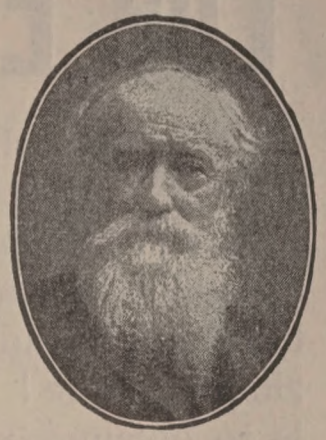

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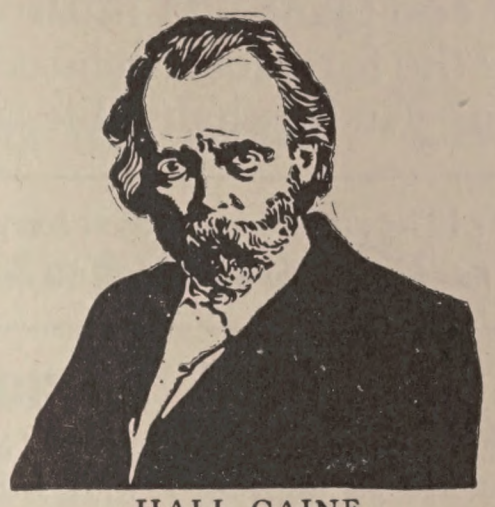

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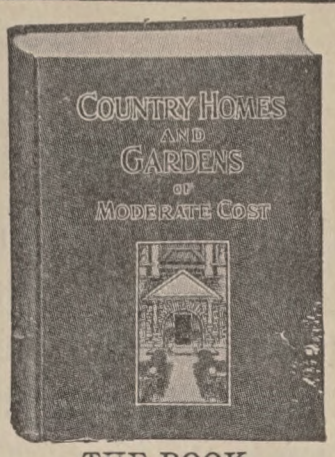

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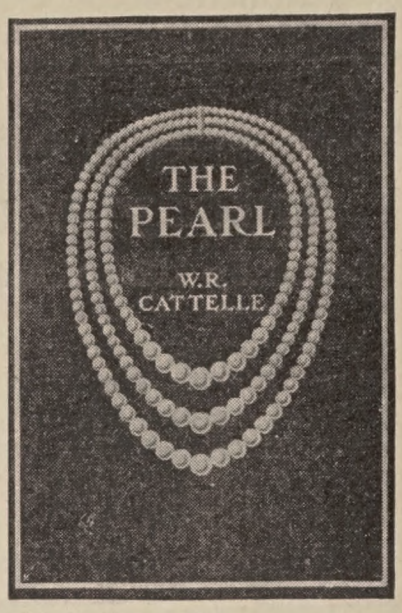

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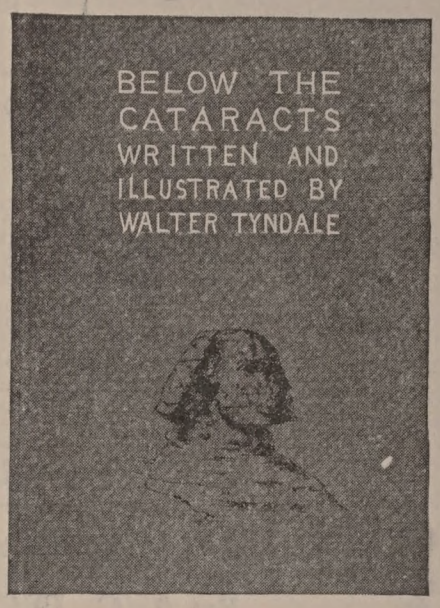

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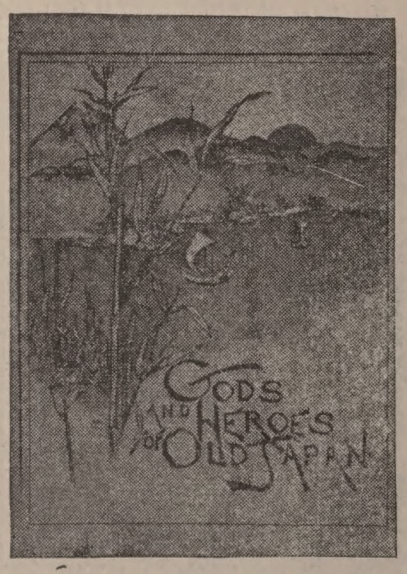

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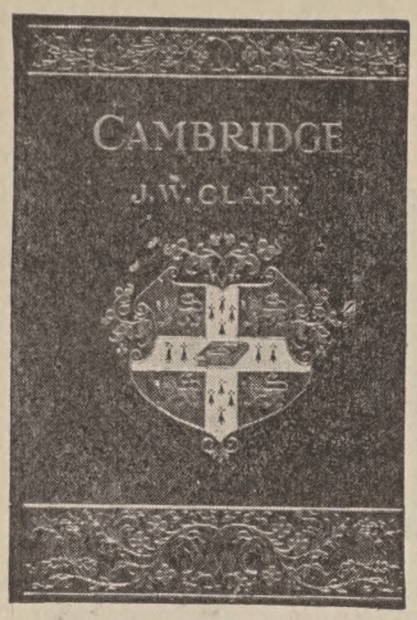

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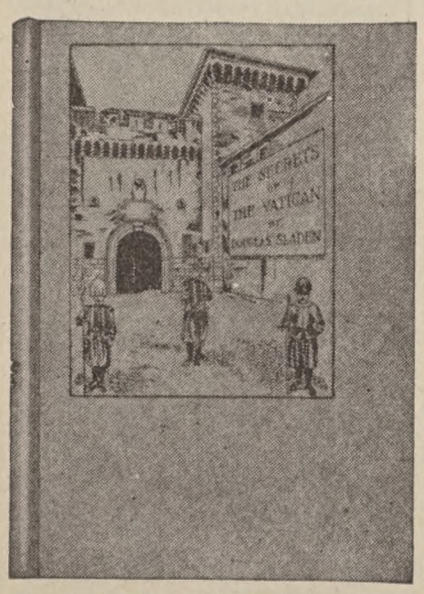

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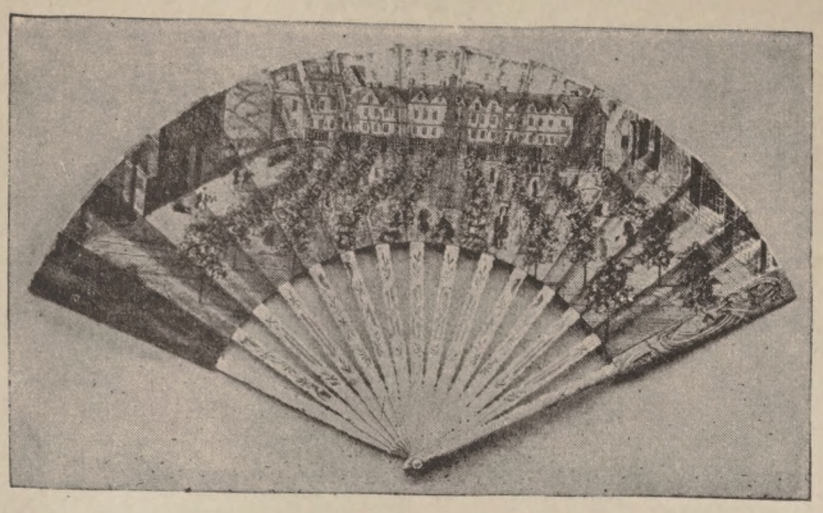

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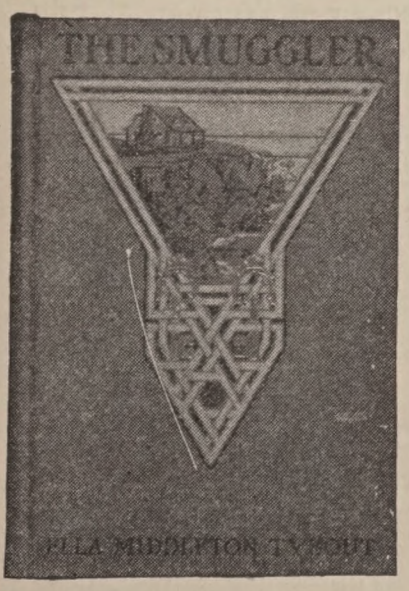

This new novel is a blithesome tale which humorously relates the hair-raising things that happen to three American girls upon an island in Canada. It does not deal with smugglers and pirates of the past, but with the modern manner of getting jewels into our fair land without asking Uncle Sam's consent. The characters are mightily convincing; and the rapid-acting plot makes the most indifferent reader "sit up" until he has devoured the last word.

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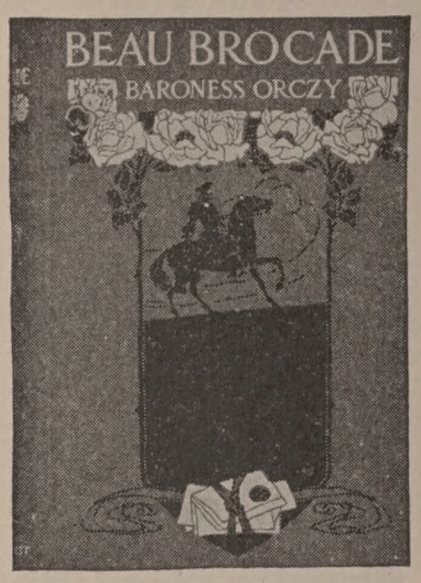

Baroness Orczy's vivid descriptive power and genius for inventing dramatic situations have won for her an enviable place in the field of romantic fiction.

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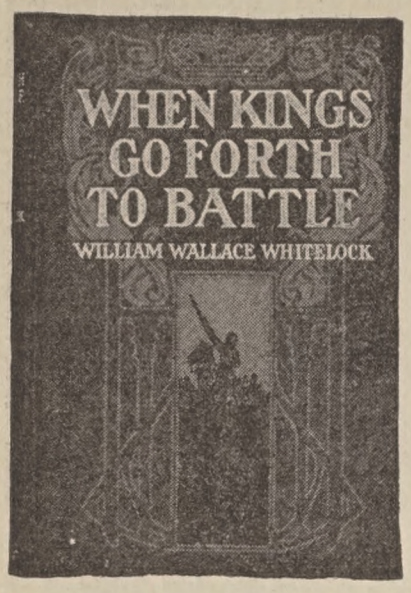

A modern story of well-drawn, strong characters, in a setting of love and adventure. The action takes place in the small German principality of *Westrum*, and involves a thrilling change of rulers, mainly through the instrumentality of an American man and girl, strangers to each other, who become involved in the intrigue in delightfully unconventional fashion. How these two, almost alone and in face of opposition and treachery, carry the undertaking to a final issue forms the story, which, despite its intensity, is always restrained and convincing. The charm of *Eunice* is real and powerful, and the reader feels that he, too, would gladly face danger and death for her.

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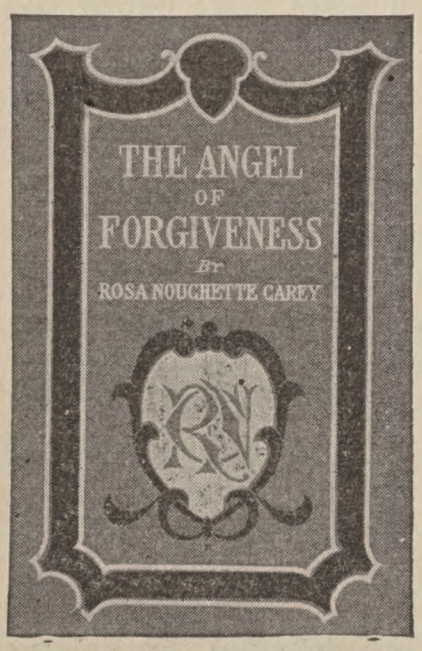

Primarily intended for young women and girls, Miss Carey's novels and stories have a quiet realism, a soothing quality, a pleasant restfulness of plot and action, which give them a wider appeal than the limited circle to which they are addressed. Her books can be unhesitatingly commended on account of their wholesome quality, their freedom from lack-adaisical sentiment and hysteric love-making, and for the literary influence of their careful and polished style.

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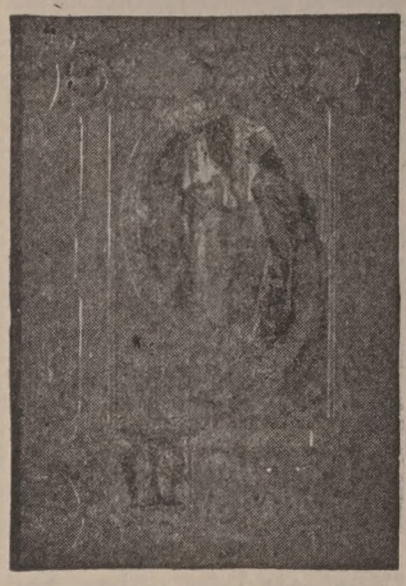

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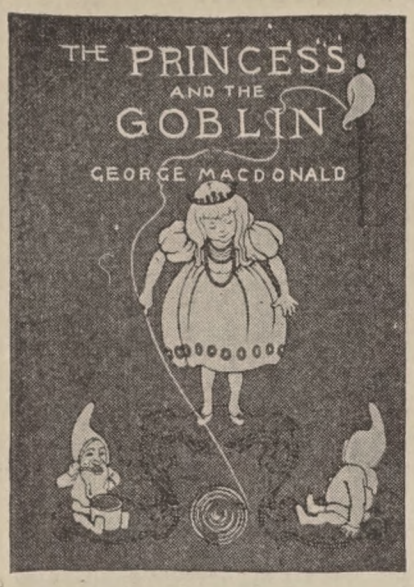

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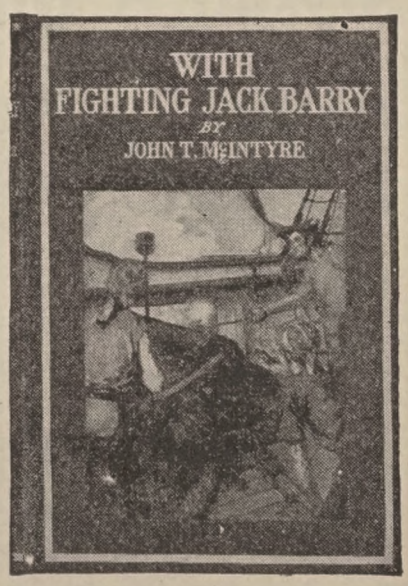

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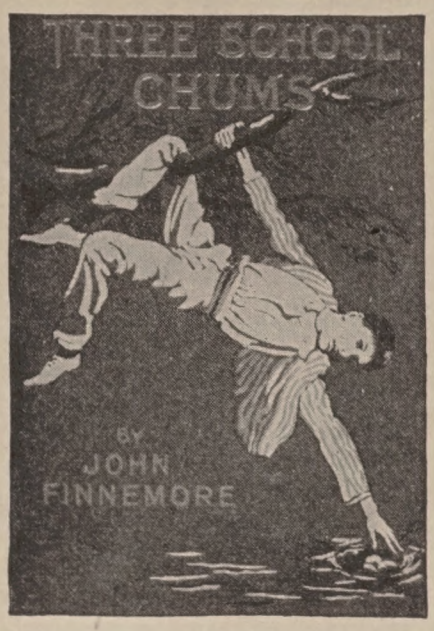

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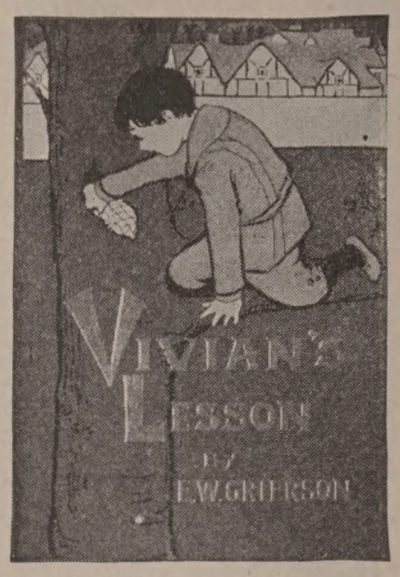

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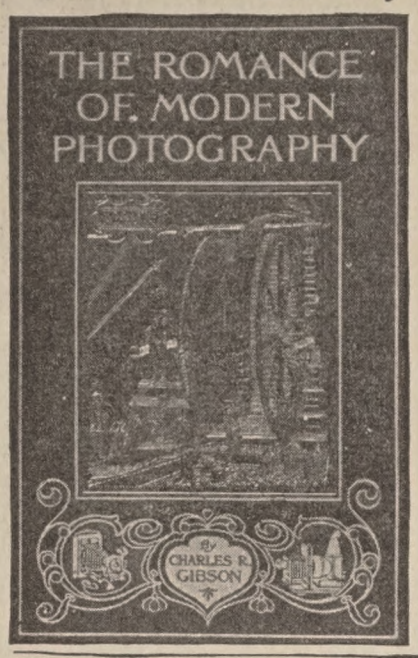

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NELSON RUST GILBERT
Author of
"The Affair at Pine Court."

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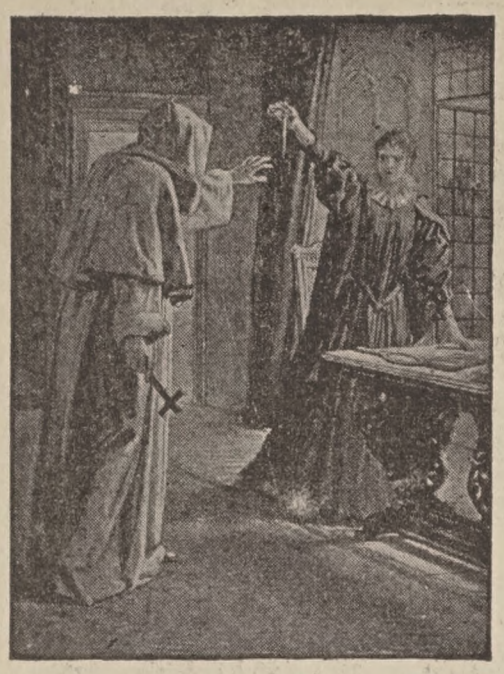

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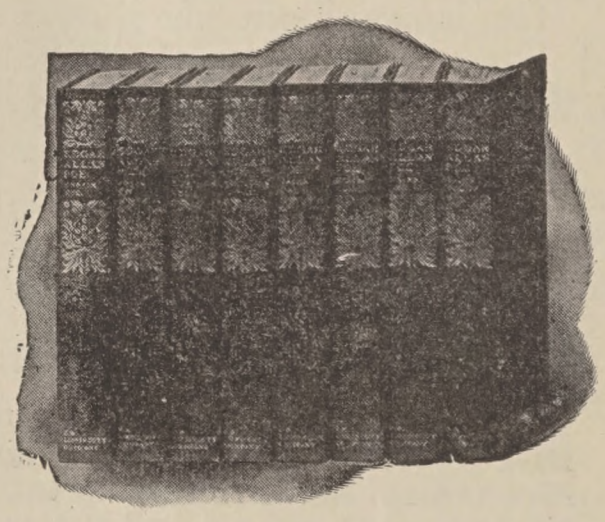

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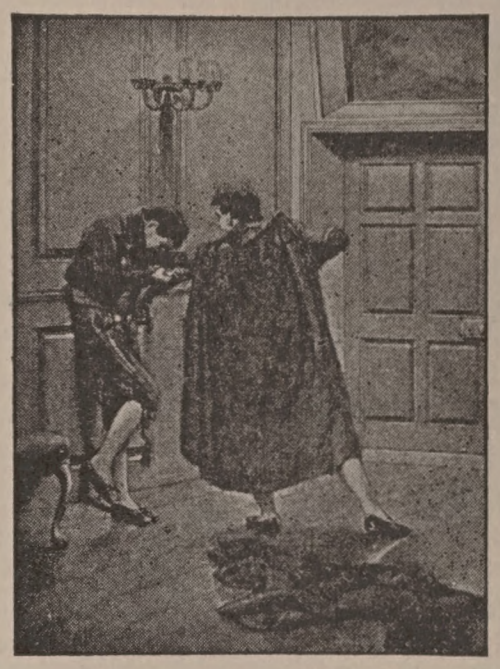

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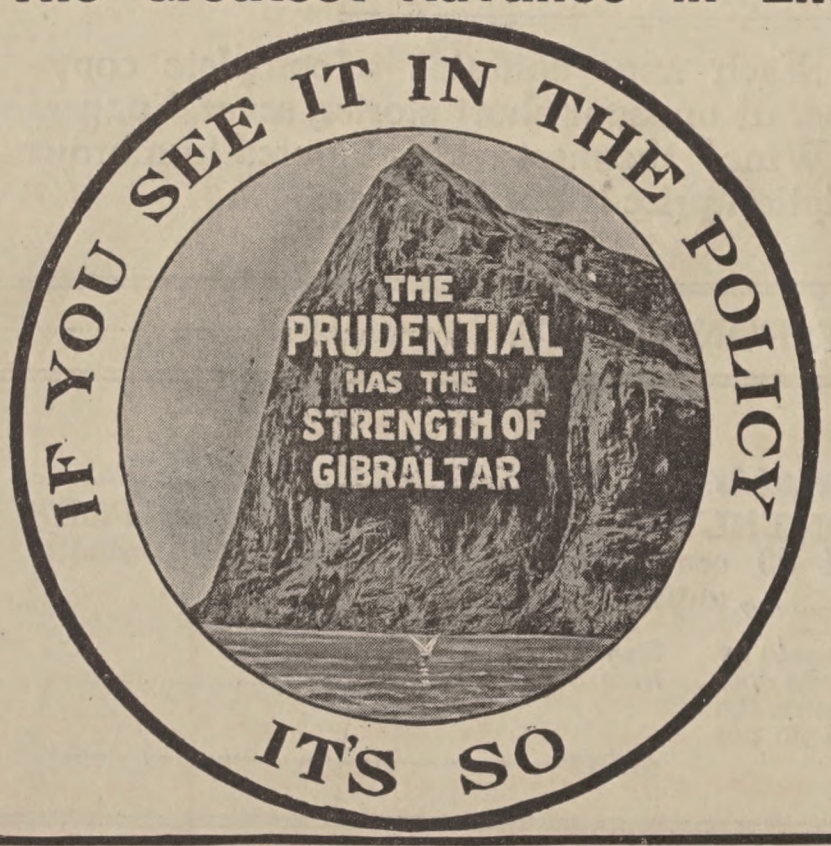

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LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

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